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WILLIAM GRAHAM D.D.

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In Memoriam.



PROFESSOR WILLIAM GRAHAM, D.D.







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Yours most cordially  
William Graham

✓  
PROFESSOR WILLIAM GRAHAM, D.D.

ESSAYS  
*HISTORICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL*

EDITED BY HIS BROTHER

WITH

PERSONAL REMINISCENCES

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM M. TAYLOR, D.D., LL.D.  
OF NEW YORK

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TO  
THE MINISTERIAL CLUB,  
OF WHICH THE LATE  
PROFESSOR GRAHAM, D.D., OF LONDON,  
WAS A MEMBER, AND AT WHOSE MONTHLY MEETINGS HE SPENT SOME  
OF THE HAPPIEST HOURS OF HIS LATTER YEARS,

*THIS VOLUME OF HIS SKETCHES*

IS

**Dedicated**

BY

HIS BROTHER,

IN THE BELIEF THAT NOTHING COULD BE MORE GRATIFYING TO HIM  
THAN THAT HIS NAME SHOULD BE PUBLICLY ASSOCIATED  
WITH THEIRS,

JAMES GRAHAM.

## *MEMBERS OF MINISTERIAL CLUB.*

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## P R E F A C E.



No sooner had the news of my brother's death spread last November than several requests were made that a selection of his sermons should be published. One friend, however, suggested that, as he had in a pre-eminent degree the gift of sketching character and setting it forth with its surroundings, a volume of sketches should be issued first.

The following have been selected from among many more. From the time when he studied in Berlin under Neander till his latest days he cultivated this gift. He lived among the heroes of the past, and yet no man ever took a deeper interest in the men around him.

Goethe said of Shakespeare's characters, "that they are like watches with transparent faces." You not only see the hands pointing to the dial, but you see the working of the machinery inside. Much of the same nature are the sketches in this volume. We have included sketches of reformers, of missionaries, of poets, and of cotemporaries.

Some of his best are withheld, as their subjects are not so widely known, and many are in his lectures to his students, which, on account of the illegibility of his handwriting, will require great labour to bring to light. Should this volume meet with a favourable reception, these may be dug up and published along with a volume of sermons. I have only included three of his cotemporaries among the sketches—Dr. Crichton was his colleague for years, and the relationship was close and cordial as father and son; Dr. Robertson was his inseparable friend, and their souls were knit to each other as the souls of Jonathan and David; and Dr. Cairns was his life-long companion since the days they met as students in the Divinity Hall till his death. Sketches of other dear friends are withheld from want of space.

At the service preceding the funeral, a telegram was read from Dr. Taylor of New York, who by reason of distance was absent. It expressed what the loss was to many besides him:—

“A great light for me has gone out in Graham; one of my oldest, closest, truest friends. His mirth to me was medicine, his talk inspiration, and his prayers wings.”

It was a great gratification to the widow and family, as well as others, when Dr. Taylor undertook to write reminiscences of his friend.

Those who knew Dr. Graham best feel that the

likeness drawn by Dr. Taylor is a genuine photograph of his many-sided character, both grave and gay. To those who did not know Dr. Graham, it will perpetuate a memory of rare gifts and worth and industry. The thanks of the friends are also due for highly appreciative sketches by Drs. Muir, Cairns, M'Leod, Elmslie, and an anonymous writer in the Liverpool papers.

The Dedication to the Ministers' Club is made by their permission. His friends were many, and his enjoyment of their society intense, and specially ministerial friends whose tastes and studies were as his own and in whose midst he could unbend himself freely.

The likeness placed at the beginning has been selected by his brother-in-law, who has generously undertaken all the expense connected with it.

It will be gratifying should the readers of this volume be as enthusiastic in their appreciation of these sketches as the one who has selected them.

JAMES GRAHAM.

U.P. MANSE, BROUGHTY FERRY,  
*8th September 1888.*



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## I.

### *REMINISCENCES OF PROFESSOR WILLIAM GRAHAM, D.D.*

By WILLIAM M. TAYLOR, D.D., NEW YORK.

WILLIAM GRAHAM was born May 5, 1823, in Paisley. He was one of a family which consisted of three daughters and five sons, three of whom were educated for the ministry, and only one of whom, Rev. James Graham, of Broughty-Ferry, still survives. His parents were both Seceders of the fine old type—intelligent, earnest, and devout. His father, the son of a sheep-farmer near Longridge, was brought up under the ministry of John Brown, son of the Haddington professor, and father of the Edinburgh commentator. His mother was a woman of marked characteristics, and great natural ability. Her predominating qualities were shrewd common-sense, genuine piety, intellectual vigour, firmness of purpose, and kindness of heart. After her husband was stricken with palsy she regularly conducted family worship in his stead; and one of William's earliest recollections was that of being taken by her into her room, where she prayed with him, while the warm tears from her eyes fell upon his cheek. He used to say that he had forgotten the prayer, but

not the tears. That was a baptism which had in it a forecast of much that he afterwards became. His mother was regarded by him always with the deepest veneration, and those who saw them together in his mature life, as it was our privilege to do, could easily discover in the nature of their intercourse with each other that she had done much to mould his character in the earliest stages of its development.

In his boyhood he attended with his parents on the ministrations of the Rev. William Nisbet, pastor of the Abbey Close Church, a preacher of mark among his brethren, whom Mr. Graham long after described as "a man of strong mind and strong affections, whose sympathy and help at a time of need I shall never cease to remember with a warmth that years will not chill."

From the pulpit, therefore, as well as in the home, he learned the first principles of the oracles of God, and was indoctrinated in that evangelical theology which to the last he held with a firmness that was not shaken by any modern assaults upon it, though he was familiar with them all.

He was educated at the Grammar School of his birthplace, and was so proficient as a scholar there, that when he went to the University of Glasgow at the early age of thirteen or fourteen, he obtained the Blackstone Medal for the entrance examination. But though, as that betokens, he was a diligent student of the ancient classics, he was not insensible to the influence of the scenery surrounding the locality in which his boyhood was spent. Throughout his life he was a loyal son of Paisley. In his lighter moods, indeed, he cracked many a joke and told many a humorous

story at its expense ; but in the depths of his heart he was always proud of his connection with it, and few things moved him more than any reference to the landscape round about it, or the doings of those who had been born within its borders. In his sermon at the jubilee of St. James's Street Church in 1875, he says—"What unspeakable loss, to look around this spot, would it be to our dear old town, and to the hearts and memories of those who have been brought up in its lanes, and wandered around its fields, to miss the hourly, and for the most part unconsciously felt influences that come from the noble sweep of the western mountains, with Ben Lomond enthroned over all ; and on the east, from the soft-lying and darkly wooded slopes of the Gleniffer Braes, with their fresh dewy mornings, or solemn gloamings, their flushing spring greenness, or their full-laden autumn gold." His teachers, therefore, were not alone the masters of the Grammar School, but also the "woods and rills" of the neighbourhood ; the memories of the old abbey, and the "genius" of the town itself, renowned as it had been for the intelligence, the public spirit, and the piety of its inhabitants.

After the usual course of study at the Glasgow University, he passed in 1840 to the Divinity Hall of the United Secession Church, where he had for fellow-students his townsman Alexander Wallace, and his friend John Cairns. The sessions of the Hall were then held in the months of August and September, leaving the rest of the year free for other engagements, and these long vacations he improved by attending the classes of Sir William Hamilton and Professor John Wilson in the University of Edinburgh. He went

also for a year to Germany, where he sat at the feet of Neander in Berlin, and had strengthened in him that love for historical research and character-analysis which were such marked features in his later work. After this he spent some time in continental travel, going down alone into Italy, and spending his twenty-first birthday in Rome.

Shortly after his return he was licensed to preach by the United Secession Presbytery of Paisley. The denomination was at that time labouring in the after-swell of the Atonement Controversy, and as an illustration of the state of feeling then existing in some quarters, we may mention that some of the hyper-Calvinistic members of the presbytery succeeded in delaying his license for a time on the ground of some suspicion of his orthodoxy. He did not care in later life to refer to this matter, which had evidently left some painful memories, and it is to these, I imagine, that he alludes in the reference to Mr. Nisbet which we have quoted above; but now and again his love of humour moved him to tell how, on coming out of the place where the presbytery met on the occasion of the postponement, he overheard an interested weaver, who had been unable to gain admission into the crowded room, ask a neighbour who had just emerged from it, "What hae they dune wi' that laddie Graham?" and receive for answer the words, "Ou, jist hung him up to dry for ither sax weeks." It would have taken more than six weeks to "dry" William Graham. Sixty years were not enough for that! But the whole experience, painful as it was, is interesting as serving to show his firm adherence to that scriptural theology which has now found a place in the Declaratory Statement of the

United Presbyterian Church, and which makes as much of the universal aspect of the atonement as of the purpose of God in election. Young as he was, even then, where truth was concerned he was unyielding. He did not make much noise about it indeed, for that is made by the breakers, not by the rock. But, "having done all," he stood.

He was called to Mount Pleasant Church, Liverpool, some time near the end of 1845, and on the 4th of March 1846 he was ordained there as colleague and successor to the Rev. Dr. Hugh Crichton. In this relation he served the church for eleven or twelve years, when the sole pastorate devolved on him in consequence of the retirement of his venerable and beloved associate. After that he laboured on in Liverpool until 1880, when he was chosen to the Professorship of Church History by the Presbyterian Church of England, an office which he held until his lamented death on 26th November 1887.

But turning now from dates and details, let me speak of my friend of more than thirty years 'as I knew him in the close intimacy of a fellowship which later absence did not weaken, and the width of the Atlantic Ocean could not destroy. The first time I saw him was at the meeting of the United Presbyterian Synod in May 1854, which was held in the old Gordon Street Church, Glasgow. It was my first experience as "a member of court," and many things about that meeting are remembered by me with unusual distinctness, but none of them more vividly than the impression which was made upon me by him. He was then in the full flush of early manhood; and like David,

“he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to.” The glitter of the constantly worn glasses somewhat concealed the brightness and frequent twinkle of his eyes; and the habit he had acquired of looking up, in order that he might get the full benefit of the help afforded by his spectacles, gave a curious “set” to his head, which made him particularly recognisable. Young as he was, he did not look even the thirty-one years to which he had attained, and when he rose to address the great missionary meeting on the Wednesday evening, it was difficult to believe that he had been already eight years in the ministry. The other speakers on that occasion were even younger in the pastorate than he, and both of them ultimately rose to places of influence and importance in the Church, but his address was the most remarkable of the three. He sank a deeper shaft than either of them, and soared, too, at times, into a region which they never approached. I remember yet the thrill I felt, and the start I gave, when I heard the Michael Angelo story, with its “*Amplius*” and its beautiful application. And now as I look back, I am impressed with the fact that the characteristics of his speech on that occasion were not wit and humour, but rather ethereal elevation, illustrative power, and pervasive spirituality.

The next time I saw him was in far other circumstances. In the July of that same year, a party of us, consisting of three young ministers, and a student of theology now considerably past his semi-jubilee, while rustivating in the Island of Arran, had set out from Brodick to ascend Goatfell. When we were about a fourth part of the way up we came upon another com-

pany, among whom we recognised the orator of the recent meeting of Synod. We speedily introduced ourselves to each other, and with that better than freemasonry which subsists between brethren in the pastorate of the same denomination, we were at once friends. He was in a rollicking mood. Away from labour and responsibility, he was bent on enjoying himself, and in seeking to do that he ministered vastly to the enjoyment of others. He was the life of the party, and with quip, and pun, and joke, and anecdote, and ridiculously apt quotation, he kept us all in mirth. His fancy for a while was in the finding of likenesses between each of the members of the company and some character in the "Pilgrim's Progress," suggested by some one's allusion to the Hill Difficulty; and to all the "pilgrims" of that happy day, I am sure that the medicine of his mirth was most stimulating and beneficial.

The next time I met him was in Liverpool in July 1855, when I first preached in Bootle. I spent then two weeks in his immediate neighbourhood, and we had long walks and talks together. Then we were only two, and our fellowship was delightful. It was "close communion" in the best sense of that phrase. Our converse was of personal experience, of our work in the ministry, of our difficulties, and of our joys. We spoke of texts and sermons, and hammered out together "plans" of discourses. We compared notes on our recent reading, on our favourite poets, our most helpful books, and our common friends. I have still, on the closet shelf here in my study, a copy of the smallest edition of "The Christian Year," which he gave to me on that occasion, and which bears his autograph, but

in a beauty and distinctness of penmanship which strikingly contrasts with his more recent performances in that line.\*

I have specified these three earliest impressions made by my friend upon me, not only because they stand out from all others with peculiar freshness, but also because my later intercourse with him served only to deepen and confirm them.

In October of 1855, I was settled over the new congregation of Bootle, and from that time on till my departure for New York, we wrought side by side, sharing each other's deepest and most sacred experiences. No cloud ever dimmed the brightness of our friendship. We differed often, and on such occasions

\* In this matter of penmanship Dr. Graham was latterly deplorable. When he wrote to me he sometimes filled sixteen pages of note-paper, and it was almost a forenoon's work to decipher them. His friend, Dr. W. B. Robertson, once said that Dr. Graham, Mr. Samuel Stitt, and himself, might be admitted into some society, I forget what, on the ground of *mutual illegibility*. Those who remember how much talk there was at the end of the Union negotiations about mutual eligibility will appreciate the joke. At one of the meetings of the English Synod of the U.P. Church held in Manchester, Dr. Graham made a brilliant address, which was somewhat marred in delivery by the difficulty he had in reading his own writing. The reporter asked him for his MS., but when he looked at it his face assumed an expression of despair, and he said he could do nothing with that, for it would take a week to set it up. Graham came to me and told me the story with a kind of comic sadness. But I got him to go with me into the vestry, and sat down and wrote to his dictation from his MS., so that, if possible, the address might be printed. As we were going on Dr. Howat came in and readily joined us, so he dictated to both of us from different parts of the address, and we had a copy made in time for the reporters. After we got through, I took it upon me to read him a small lecture on the subject, and he made many expressions of penitence, and many resolutions of amendment, but—the habit was too inveterate.

each argued stoutly for his own opinion, but we loved the same all through ; and in the end, perhaps, though neither might acknowledge it at the time, the views of both were modified in some degree. I know not if I was ever of much service to him, for he always seemed to me so richly furnished that, in conference, I could add nothing to him. But I do know that he was of immense service to me, for—

“ He was rich where I was poor,  
And he supplied my want the more  
As his unlikeness fitted mine.”

What struck me earliest in our fellowship, was the vast extent of his reading, coupled with the firm grasp with which he retained the substance of what he had read. One often meets a mere *helluo librorum*, who can enumerate by the dozen the books which he has read, but can give little or no idea of their contents. Sometimes, again, one comes on another who has made a thorough study of some limited field of literature, and can speak exhaustively of that, but knows little beyond. But Graham was remarkable for the combination of thoroughness with extent and variety in his reading. Almost before you knew that a new book was out he had read it and could give you an idea of its drift and an estimate of its value. He had so won over by his smiles, or by his wiles, the librarian of the Lyceum, that he could get from him any book—I had almost said any quantity of books—new or old, which he wanted, and keep it as long as he chose, without fear of the fines which that functionary usually exacted, without abatement or relenting, from

others. And if a new book which he had not yet seen were lying on your table, it was dangerous to draw his attention to it; for if you did, it was sure to be borrowed by him, and its return postponed *sine die*. He intermeddled almost with all knowledge. Philosophy was read as carefully, if not perhaps with as much relish, as poetry. He delighted in literary criticism, and was at home in all things relating to Biblical study. But the field of his choice was history, with its allied departments of biography and antiquities. He did not care from what quarter information came, if it was only true; and he was as catholic in his range of authors as he was in that of subjects. He did not confine himself to any party or school, and was as well up in Newman as he was in Trench, or Kingsley, or Mozley. He read as rapidly as he read extensively. He brought so much to the book that was in his hand, that he could easily lay hold of what was new in it. George Lawson said about John Brown, his favourite pupil, that "he had a way of getting at the kernel of a text without breaking his teeth upon the shell," and something of the same sort might be said of Graham in his treatment of a book. He retained of it all that he needed or wanted, and threw the rest away. Thus the extent of his reading did not interfere with his independence. He did not implicitly follow any one. He might have taken for his motto in that regard, "*Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri.*" An idea was not any more authoritative for him, by reason of its having been put into print; and though he kept up with the newest issues from the press, he did not adopt any notion simply because of its novelty. But he "took stock" of each

work he read, and could give you an excellent summary of its contents. If you wanted to know the literature of any subject, you had only to apply to him, and even on the spur of the moment he would enumerate to you the best works upon it, and give you a brief description of the peculiarities of each, with a fair estimate of its value. In this way he was almost as good as an encyclopædia to his friends,—at least he was often so to me, and I believe that most of the brethren who were on a footing of intimacy with him would bear similar testimony regarding him.

But while no one could be long in his company without discovering the extent and variety of his reading, that for which by most he will be remembered was his wit. When he was with three or four friends in the study, or in the compartment of a railway carriage on the way to the Synod, or at the table of a brother, he was positively irrepressible. He would play with a word until he seemed to have exhausted all the possibilities in the case, and then at the last come out with something so beautiful that you were lost in admiration of it, or something so execrably bad that even its badness provoked the wildest laughter. His humour came mostly in series, one joke suggesting another, and that a third, until the line was ended. It was like the going off of a Roman candle. First was launched one fire-ball, which exploded into a shower of sparks, then another, and another, until the last shot up and burst with a particularly loud report which told that for a time there was an end. It would be vain to attempt to give illustrations of it, for often the humour was so connected with the time and place that it would evaporate in its repetition. But to his

honour be it said, that he never used his wit to wound another, or with any waspish or malicious intent. He was not one who would rather lose his friend than his joke, and if unintentionally he gave a wound, he was unhappy until it was completely healed.

While, however, we give prominence to his wit, it may surprise some to learn that it was not his deepest or most characteristic feature. When he was in company you could hardly see anything else because of the dazzlement it made ; but when you were alone with him it was quite different. Then it was not so much wit as wisdom ; not so much mirth as musing, that came from him. This was not because he kept his wit for display, for nothing was ever farther from his mind than the desire to display anything of his, but it was because he used it mostly for defence. Dr. Macleod has said in his delightful sketch, that he employed it for the purpose of keeping off those who for some reason or other were not agreeable to him. And doubtless there is truth in that representation of the matter. Like Abraham Lincoln, he could "bluff" off an impertinent inquiry, or turn the edge of an unreasonable complaint, by a funny story or a smart witticism, thus saving himself without giving offence, and when there was need he did not hesitate to take such a course. But my belief is, that his main purpose in giving rein to his wit was to fight off, for the time, deep inner depression, which he desired to conceal, and, if possible, to destroy. I cannot explain the psychology of the matter, but it is no uncommon thing to find that those who are the greatest sources of mirth for others are themselves afflicted with besetting sadness. It was so with Graham. From an early period in his life he was

subject to times of depression, during which he was in the depths of despondency; and while he could and did speak to his closest friends about these, he covered them over in general society by his fun. When I knew him first there was not much of this depression about him, but when Dr. Crichton retired, and the sole pastorate of Mount Pleasant Church devolved upon him, the heavier responsibility and greater labour so told upon him that he became terribly depressed. After he removed his residence to Birkenhead there was a great improvement, but when he entered on his professorial duties the strain caused by the preparation of his lectures was so great that he was thrown back into the depths. It is impossible to say what the cause of this depression was, though, since his death, I have thought that it might be the beginnings of that disease in the liver which carried him off at last. But a glimpse into its reality, as well as a specimen of the kind of fight he maintained against it, may be furnished by the following sentences, which I take from a letter to me dated December 29, 1882, written in his Birkenhead study, and, characteristically enough also, in pencil:—

“Well, I am down here once more, in my old study, the place of many thoughts and dreams and converse with the dead spirits, and, I trust also, deep communion with my own spirit, and yearnings for and yieldings unto the blessed Spirit of God and of Christ, the Counsellor and the Comforter. I have had some fight and friction since I saw you. The devil in the pit of my stomach is chained so far, but he has considerable length and range of tether. But God is cheering me, and there are times when Satan is bruised under my

feet, however feeble and bruised themselves be, and all through His power. So, *sursum corda*, in this heartening I go to cross the threshold of the New Year." These words will illustrate what I mean when I say that he used his wit as much to defend himself from this tendency to depression and to keep himself from revealing its existence to others, as to ward off the darts of "unreasonable and foolish men."

They will furnish an excuse, too, if any be required, for the occasionally excessive indulgence in fun for which our friend was sometimes blamed. For when one is trying to hide a secret he is sometimes apt to overdo the acting. They will enable us also to understand how he could so often, so easily, and so quickly make the transition from the merriest laughter to the loftiest devotion. The fun was only on the surface, but the man himself dwelt in the deepest seriousness. His wit was thus like the phosphorescence on the top of an Atlantic wave, sparkling up out of the darkness, but having a great depth beneath. The depth is the ocean; and in like manner the true man was the man below the surface, confronting ever more those mysteries of being which throw the soul back upon God in Christ. That under-depth of unfaltering trust in the blessed Redeemer was the constant element in the character of my friend; and so, when I have heard those who knew him only slightly express their surprise that so soon after the extravagance of his mirth he could talk serenely on the holiest things, or lead his friends in a prayer which took them up to the very step of the throne of grace, I have been reminded of the story told concerning Guthrie of Fenwick and his friend Durham, author of the once famous treatise

on the Apocalypse, to the following effect: "On one occasion, at a meeting of his brethren, Mr. Guthrie, who had been more than ordinarily gay and cheerful, was asked to pray, which he did in such a solemn and affecting manner that the grave Mr. Durham could not help expressing his amazement, telling him that if he had laughed half so much, he could not have prayed for a long time after. Mr. Guthrie replied, that were it not for his laughing, his disease would soon make him sad enough."\* With a change of names we could truthfully tell the same story concerning Graham, and more than one of his clerical neighbours.

But I pass on to speak of his tender sympathy with the suffering and sorrowful, which also, unless I greatly err, had its root in the personal affliction to which we have been alluding. You could not know Graham thoroughly until you were in trial, and he had knelt with you in prayer at the mercy-seat. More than once or twice that privilege was mine, and his supplications then offered are among the holiest memories of my life. I cannot recall now any of the words he used, but I never can forget the feeling of strength and encouragement which, by the grace of God, was given to me through them at the time. It was like that which Trench describes in words which I adapt and appropriate—

"We knelt, and all around us seemed to lower ;  
We rose, and all the distant and the near  
Stood forth in shining outline brave and clear.  
We knelt, how weak ! we rose, how full of power !"

Nor was it only in seasons of bereavement (as it was

\* McCrie's "Sketches of Scottish Church History," vol. ii. p. 106.

with me) that his tenderness of sympathy was manifested; it was shown by him also in times of misfortune, adversity, and even backsliding. He drew closer to a man when he was down than ever he had done before when he was prosperous. He was no "swallow" friend, twittering round you in the summer of your gladness, but forsaking you for a sunnier atmosphere in the winter of your need. You could always count on him. If he were in your neighbourhood, he would be sure to put himself by your side; and if he were far away, a letter assuring you that he had been praying for you would come soon from his hand; and so fully would it enter into your experience that you could hardly read it for your tears. Very loving too he was in his dealing with the erring. He never made light of the evil that had been done, and was always faithful in his expostulation with him who had done it, but he would not give him up. He clung to him even to the last, and frequently he had his reward in restoring the offender to his Saviour, to himself, and to the Church. Repeated instances of this kind, told me in the sacred confidence of pastoral fellowship, come to my remembrance as I write, but none of them may be specified here. I allude to them only to illustrate a side of the character of my friend which many never knew, and by reason of their ignorance of which not a few miserably misjudged him. He was a true Barnabas—the son of consolation—because "the Lord God had given him," not as a ready-made accomplishment, for that is not His usual way of giving, but as the result of his own deep experience of conflict with recurring seasons of depression, "the tongue of the learned, that he should

know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary."

In his pastoral relationships our brother had great happiness and honour. His venerable colleague, whose working days were almost over before I went to Liverpool, regarded him with affection, mingled with pride, and to the last they were true yoke-fellows, ever anxious to promote each other's comfort and usefulness. A contrast to each other in many respects, they were yet one in seeking constantly the prosperity and efficiency of the Mount Pleasant Church. Dr. Crichton was a preacher of the old-fashioned sort. One of the last survivors of the Selkirk students who had sat at the feet of George Lawson, his discourses, rich in scriptural exposition and quotation, were constructed on the old systematic lines of doctrinal instruction, and were delivered with a singular unction that was greatly helped by a rich melodious voice. He had a tender heart and a gracious manner, and possessed in fuller combination than is often found, either in the ministry or out of it, the qualities of the gentleman and the Christian. The warmth of his nature, in his social moments, sometimes exploded into an outburst of indignation at things which provoked his antagonism, and on such occasions he could be vehement in his invective, and often strikingly original in his epithets. But these out-flashes were but rare; and when they were over, which they soon were, no one could laugh more heartily at them than he did himself. At such times, like Carlyle, he said far more than he meant, and was carried away by his love of humour—for he, too, had a rich vein of that ore in him—to such lengths that the whole affair became at last a veritable

*reductio ad absurdum*, ending commonly in uproarious merriment. These occasions, unlike geysers in the fact that they had no periodicity, were like them in the suddenness of their up-shooting and in the brevity of their duration, and when they were over, they *were* over and left no bad results. So far from that indeed, they were like the escape of steam from a safety-valve, and probably prevented the occurrence of something worse. He was beloved by all the younger brethren in the ministry around him, for he took them to his heart, entertained them in his home—greatly assisted therein by his noble wife—rejoiced with them in their joys, and wept with them in their sorrows. He had not, perhaps, the massive weight and intellectual grasp of his predecessor Dr. Stewart, and he certainly lacked the sparkling genius of his youthful colleague, but his ministry was rich in evangelical fervour and spiritual results. The very unlikeness of the one to the other ministered to the harmony of their fellowship with each other, and in the declining years of Dr. Crichton, after his retirement from active service, it was touching to see the thoughtful care which Mr. Graham took of him, and the tender solicitude which he invariably manifested for his welfare. He was indeed the staff in the hand of his colleague's old age, and to the honour of both be it recorded, that he had, to the last, no warmer or more devoted friends than the members of Dr. Crichton's family.

In his own home Graham was singularly blessed. It would be an intrusion into a circle of sacred confidence to say all that might, in other circumstances, be truthfully recorded in this regard. Let it suffice that in his wife he had the rich treasure of a true help-

meet, in whom his heart did safely trust, and that his children ever gladdened him by their consistent conduct, their happy cheerfulness, and their devoted love. He had no domestic cares and few household sorrows. Only once during the long season of our fellowship did the dark angel cross his threshold; and everything in his family surroundings was helpful to him in his work. But enough: his latest words to her who had shared with him so long the vicissitudes of life, "All right, Annie, I will, thank God, soon be better," are more eloquent than any statement of mine could be, as a revelation of the oneness, the tenderness, and the affectionateness that subsisted between the heads of that happy household.

In the congregation generally he was like a son to the elder members of his church, while he was the elder brother, the leader, and the inspirer of the younger. When I knew it first, Mount Pleasant congregation was rich in the possession of some venerable and noble men, who had made their way into prominence in commercial life, while at the same time they had maintained "without fear and without reproach" an honourable Christian character. Naturally enough, such a youth as Graham was, at the time of his ordination, could not all at once be all to them that their senior pastor had become. But they did not, because they could not, despise his youth. They received him as a son, and in the course of time—as so often happens in the domestic circle—the son grew up into the companion, the friend, and ultimately the trusted counsellor, whose advice was preferred to that of all others. Not all at once, indeed, was this result secured, and perhaps now and then there were differences and

discussions more or less serious, for they were all human, and moreover, they were all Scotchmen; but before long these venerable Nestors, with Dr. Ferguson at their head, were as proud of their young minister as they were of their church and of its history.

With the young people, however, from the first Mr. Graham was a special favourite; and for that many reasons might be given. He was young himself, and so could enter heartily into their feelings and experience. He knew their dangers and temptations, and was not afraid to speak plainly and faithfully as well as lovingly concerning them. He was besides eminently approachable. There was no stand-offishness about him. He was not like a cold statue raised on a pedestal and surrounded by an iron railing; but he was a living and loving brother. Every one of them felt that he could go to him, and no one of them was ever chilled by the reception which he gave him. Then his large literary resources enabled him to be a guide to them in the prosecution of self-culture. He knew just what would meet their need, and he could direct them where to find it. He was never too busy to attend to their wants, or too indifferent to think of their perplexities. Hence the Young Men's Literary Society of Mount Pleasant became one of the most successful and efficient in the whole district. I do not know whether or not that society was originated at his suggestion, but it was certainly stimulated to its highest excellence by his inspiration. For it, primarily, he wrote some of his best lectures. He took a warm interest in its discussions. He was always the great attraction at its annual meetings. He was often consulted by its members as to the particular

subjects on which they were to write or speak at its gatherings, and I do not believe that there is anywhere to-day a single individual who was privileged to be connected with it, who will not say that he was immensely indebted for intellectual stimulus to its discussions, and for much of the best that is in him to the influence of Mr. Graham upon him through its instrumentality. From among those connected with it at one time or another there have come at least one member of Parliament, and one mayor of Liverpool, and not a few of those who have been leaders in public affairs in the great seaport graduated from its ranks.

But coming to more strictly personal experiences, I must not forget to speak of the bearing of Mr. Graham towards the members and ministers of what I may call the daughter-churches of Mount Pleasant. During his pastorate no fewer than three churches were formed by direct colonisation from his congregation, and he was called to part with not a few members who became connected with other churches that had sprung up in their neighbourhood, and belonged to the English Presbyterian denomination. Grange Lane, Birkenhead, was already a flourishing church when I first knew it in 1855; but at the time of its formation, in 1846, some of its most active members had been drawn from Mount Pleasant. Of the forty members over whom I was settled in Bootle the majority had brought certificates from the same congregation. The church at Egremont was largely recruited from its ranks, and that of Queen's Road, Everton, was at first all but entirely composed of those who had sat in its pews. The same was true of Prince's Road. All these belonged to what was then the United Presby-

terian Church, but the English Presbyterian congregations of Fairfield and Sefton Park had each a few men of influence who had been long identified with Mount Pleasant. The formation of these churches was required by the extension of the city, and by the operation of that centrifugal force which in all large towns causes the removal to residences in the suburbs of those who have grown in material prosperity. None the less, however, the parting with so many members could not but be a trial, and doubtless it was often felt as such by our brother. But Mount Pleasant held its place of prominence and influence in spite of all these "hivings," and that it did so was owing not only to the excellence of his ministrations, but also to the spirit which he manifested toward the new congregations and their pastors. However much he felt the changes as they came, he spoke these feelings, for the most part, only in his closet, and on his knees. He became the intimate friend of all the new pastors. His advice was always at their service. His help was never denied to them. He became almost a member of each of their families, and on all their great occasions he was in the place of honour. He was ever ready for an exchange of pulpits with them. No one was more welcome at their Friday evening pre-communion services. At the annual social meetings of their churches he was almost invariably present, and delivered one of those indescribable addresses, in which wit and pathos, mirth and seriousness, cordial congratulations and kindly criticism, playful banter and earnest, elevating, ennobling spirituality were so marvellously interblended. He had no jealousy of them or of their success. He delighted always to hear them do

their best, and helped them to do it. If, on any occasion, they rose to a higher level than usual, he was sure to congratulate them, while again, if they fell into any serious mistake, he would seek in the kindest manner to prevent its repetition. His coming into their homes was felt by them to be a benediction, and their children delighted in his mirth. If they knew that he was in the house these little folks would contrive somehow to get into his presence, and they enjoyed his humour almost as much as their parents did. A ludicrous though genuine illustration of this was given me a few years ago by a friend, who told me that Dr. Graham (for the thing happened after he had obtained his degree) had been with him for some days on the occasion of preaching anniversary sermons in his church. At his departure, his place in the guest-chamber was to be taken by another minister who was coming to attend a meeting of Synod in the neighbourhood, and on the morning of the day on which the new arrival was expected, one of the little boys of the family, kneeling by his mother, spontaneously added to his usual prayer these two petitions: "Please God, bring Mr. ——— safely here, and may he be as funny as the Doctor!"

During the years of his pastorate, from about 1857 to the time of the removal of his residence to Birkenhead, he was a weekly visitor in my house at Bootle. Our usual course on such occasions was to have a quiet *tête-à-tête* in the study, which, however our talk began, or through whatever course it might ramble, came at last to some reference to his malady, whereupon I would start up and say, "Now that won't do! no more of that; come and let us take a stroll." Then we would sally forth for a long walk along the Bootle

sands, in the teeth of the keen sea-breeze, and back again inland by the lanes in Litherland, or sometimes up through Orrell as far as Aintree, and round by Walton. All this while, as much to keep him from thinking of himself as for my own information, I was continually posing him with question after question, in response to which he poured forth his rich stores of information ; or I would beguile him into an argument, in which his keen subtlety, sharp in its edge and swift in its stroke as a Damascus blade in the hand of Saladin, would come out ; or I would set him on a description of the speech of some great orator whom he had recently been hearing, or on the criticism of some author whom we had both been reading. After a couple of hours of such physical and mental exercise we returned, with all the mists removed and in high spirits, to a joyous tea. Thence he rose and returned to Erskine Street, and after giving him a " Scotch convoy " up Stanley Road, I came back to my study, not mourning over lost time, but rejoicing in the stimulus which I had received, and which always made my work better than it would otherwise have been. It was not different with Mr. Thompson, then of Birkenhead, Dr. Howat, Dr. Grosart, and Dr. Muir ; and though Mr. Towers and Dr. Macleod were older brethren, there was the same cordial fellowship between him and them. Thus the perfect understanding between him and their pastors took away to a large extent the pain of parting with those who had gone from him for the formation of these new churches.

Of what sort his pulpit discourses were at this time the few sermons which he published will make manifest. I often thought that the years of his collegiate

pastorate, though advantageous to him in other respects, notably in that of health, were attended with this serious disadvantage, that they rather interfered, owing to the alternation of services between him and Dr. Crichton, with his entrance upon and prosecution of a connected course of instruction from the pulpit, such as the exposition of a gospel or an epistle, would have been. Possibly I am at fault here, but I cannot remember that he ever engaged in any pulpit work of that kind. His liking was for isolated texts, and in his later ministry he had a special fancy for the combination of two or more texts, such as the "wist nots" in the histories of Moses and Samson, the "three sleeps of Peter," and the like. As we have already indicated, he was always at his best in his analysis of character and motive, and his practical sermons were often very excellent. Dr. Ormiston told me, the other day, that his discourse in Hamilton, during his first visit to America, from the words, "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called," lifted him and his people up to the third heaven; and that on "Influence," preached at the jubilee of St. James's Church, Paisley, and afterwards published in the memorial of that occasion, is an admirable specimen of his best work. His sermons always held doctrine in solution, but they were rarely, if ever, what one would call doctrinal, and though he did not indulge much in exposition, he never overlooked exegesis, but could always give a reason for the view which he took of the passage from which he was speaking. His style was vivid and electric, abounding in brief epigrammatic sentences, and so was rather abrupt and broken than climactic. His illustrations, often exceedingly apt, were not loaded

with elaboration, but rather given as they first struck him, and so resembled the original sketches of an artist, which are often more powerful than the finished paintings which are made from them. He did not deal much in argument, and when he did his mind moved so rapidly—leaping at one bound over intermediate steps—that many were unable to keep up with him, and were apt to think that his conclusions were intuitions rather than inferences. But the truth was, the logical connection was clear to himself, but he was impatient of the process of showing it in full, and rushed on to it, as a buoyant youth will often vault upstairs three or more steps at a time. But he seldom argued. His strength lay in dealing with experience, and he had been constrained so to study his own heart-history that the inner life of every man became to him an object of engrossing interest. In dealing with character he did not confine himself to the men of the Bible. His sermons on Thomas Guthrie and David Livingstone, and his noble paper on his friend, Dr. Wm. B. Robertson, all indicate his power in this direction; while his funeral discourses on his co-presbyters, Dr. Skinner and Dr. M'Kerrow, will be read with interest even by those who did not know these men themselves, just as we are attracted to one of Rembrandt's portraits, the Guilder for example, not because we knew the original, but because we are impressed with the individuality which he has put into his delineation, and the skill with which he has done so. Sometimes, too, his antiquarian leanings guided him in his selection, for when everybody was talking some years ago of the transit of Venus, he dug up an almost forgotten chapter of Liverpool history, and preached a

discourse on Jeremiah Horrocks, of the ancient chapel of Toxteth, who had observed a similar transit in his days, and who as an astronomer had anticipated much that has been developed since he lived and wrote. Indeed, such was his liking for this sort of discourse, that the death of any man of great distinction was sure to evoke from him a sermon on his character and work. Nor was it only in his pulpit that his love for character-sketching appeared. It showed itself in almost everything he did, and his biography of Dr. John Macfarlane, over and above its excellence in the portrayal of its subject, is remarkable for the number of verbal vignettes which it contains, and which, though they are only miniatures, are so truthful as to be at once recognised by all who knew the originals.

In the preparation of his discourses for the pulpit he was far from being either dilatory or perfunctory. He began early in the week, and was generally able to give a large part of Saturday to exercise in the open air. He spent the first days in thoroughly reading up for his subject, then after a time of meditation carried on not in the study only, but wherever he went, he sat down when he was ready, and wrote off his sermon at a heat. This plan he followed also in his professorial days in the preparation of his lectures, and the following extract from a letter to me dated Nov. 8, 1881, will show how he worked it out. "I am quite hard at work. This session is in one sense harder than the last, though *it* was the first. For I am now busy with the Nicene Creed, the Pelagian and Augustinian controversies, the growth of the Papacy, &c. Last week I read hours and hours Augustine's works, and I feel as if one week's steady, plodding, interested reading of

the original documents had put me inside of the real source as well as course of the Church History of these days, and days they were when centuries were moulded." These words are characteristic. He read himself *into the inside of men and movements*, and then depicted what he saw from that place of vantage. That was the secret of the vivid presentation which he gave of characters and events,—so that as one of his students said, "You saw saints and heroes move before you each with the light of life in his face." His paper on "Calvin," and his lecture on "Luther," were prepared in the same way; and the course he followed was attended with this advantage, that he acquired much more than he could use at the time, so that a great store of material remained which might be turned to profitable account another day. The chips from his chisel were often more valuable than the finished statues of other men.

In pastoral visitation, though he did not prosecute it with methodical or systematic regularity,—indeed, I question if he did or could do much very methodically—Graham was always natural and successful. He had a home in the hearts of all his people. He knew their circumstances, and could always deal truly and tenderly with them. The humour which he rigidly, I could almost say inexorably, excluded from the pulpit, was permitted to play about his talk in the home; but he could always, without any constraint, introduce the *one* thing which he had come to say; and in times of sorrow he was a true consoler, for he could comfort others "with the comfort wherewith he himself was comforted of God." He had the enviable ability to recognise and name all his people

as he met them, and often as he and I walked together through the streets of Liverpool, our progress was retarded by his repeated meetings with Mount Pleasant people, with whom he insisted on stopping a few moments to ask them of their welfare. On such occasions, as he parted from his parishioner to rejoin me, it was usually with a benediction on his lips such as "Every comfort be with you," and both went on their way, each with a brighter face and a lighter step because of the greeting. Often, too, he would "drop in" on some of his people unannounced and unexpected, to partake of their hospitality; but that which would have been an unwarranted liberty in others, was relished in him, for he was regarded as virtually a member of their families; and though they frequently smiled at his little eccentricities, they always felt that he had left a brightness and a blessing behind him.

In the Presbytery, on the meetings of which he was a regular attendant, he did not take any very weighty or sustained part in the transaction of business, at least until the Union question came to the front, and that was discussed mainly after I had left for America. But he was a kind of free-lance, always on the alert, now interjecting his witty "asides" or his irrepressible jokes, and then subsiding again into silence. I cannot recall, in all the years during which I sat beside him in the U.P. Presbytery of Lancashire, a single instance—apart from the Union question—of his making anything like a sustained speech there. But though his humour was always exuberant on such occasions, it was often made by him to serve a serious and wholesome purpose. Whenever he saw that a

discussion was becoming personal, and that there was danger of brethren being estranged from each other, he became a peace-maker by his wit; for when the laugh which he had raised was over, the fighting spirit was for the time exorcised. So again, when a great deal of time was being wasted on a matter of infinitesimal importance, the folly was cured by him homœopathically by a sally of his fun, and when things were approaching an exaggeration of the pathetic, he dissolved the tear-cloud into laughter. Once when a long time seemed likely to be spent over the settlement of the hour for dinner, each man who spoke thinking mainly of his own convenience, he brought matters to a point by saying, "Moderator, what's the use of talking so long about a mere *provisional* arrangement? I move that we adjourn for dinner at two o'clock," and the thing was settled. Another time, when a call had come to a co-presbyter from a Glasgow church, and the pleadings on both sides had been particularly tender—verging, indeed, on the sentimental—a poor sooty sparrow came fluttering down the chimney into the grate of the school-room in which we were assembled, and Graham, quick as a flash, convulsed us all with the quotation, "As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place." There was an end to the sentimental for a season after that. Thus his wit was not always given forth for its own sake, but was often turned by him to good and profitable account.

In those days the U.P. Presbytery of Lancashire extended far beyond the boundaries of that county, and had congregations as far north as Kendal, as far east as Bradford, and as far south as Birmingham,

and, for a time, Bristol. The travelling expenses of the members were paid from a common Presbytery Fund, to which every congregation contributed in a certain proportion, and the meetings were held with each church consecutively. Usually after the Presbytery business had been finished there was a social meeting with the members of the congregation in the evening, and in this way all the ministers became acquainted with all the churches, a kind of Presbyterian visitation of each church was secured, and much good was done in the way of guiding and stimulating the members in them all. At such meetings—tea meetings they commonly were—Mr. Graham was always a prime favourite, and his speech on the “building of the wall,” or some kindred subject, would be so varied for each place as to give prominence to the lesson which most of all was needed there. He was invariably the minister’s friend ;—sometimes I thought he was blindly or unwisely so—but if that was a failing, it was one leaning to the side of the brotherhood, most of whom could say he “hath been a succourer of many and of myself also.” After such a meeting the members of the Presbytery were entertained in the homes of such brethren in the congregation as volunteered to receive them, and it was a great treat to be billeted, as I often was, in the same house with Graham. He was then in his richest mood. The excitement of meeting the brethren, the afterglow of the social gathering, and the warmth of hospitality with which he was received, all combined to raise his spirits to the highest cheerfulness, and it was often far past midnight when we retired. Sometimes, however, things would take another turn, and he would

fall into a pensive frame, and occasionally, foregoing the evening meeting altogether, he would go off for an excursion into the neighbourhood. Once I remember, after a Presbytery in Kendal, he hurried me off with him to Windermere, whence we walked by Ambleside and Rydal Mount to Grasmere, where we spent the night, and where nature

“Poured over us her soft influences,  
Her sunny hues, fair forms, and breathing sweets,  
Her melodies of woods, and winds, and waters.”

What talk we had of Wordsworth, and Hartley Coleridge, and Arnold, and Stanley, and John Wilson, and De Quincey! and what silent musings in the Grasmere churchyard beside that plain headstone! Truly the name of the place that summer night was Peace; and when, on the following day, retracing our steps to Windermere and going by train to Liverpool, we found ourselves once more in the midst of the bustling life of the town in which our lots were cast, we felt new energy for the prosecution of our work in the service of God and of our generation there.

But Graham was much more than a Presbyterian. Nobly loyal to the church of his fathers, he did not think that his being so was incompatible with close fellowship with men of other denominations. He was as genial with the clergy of the National Church as they would let him, but with the brethren of the Evangelical Nonconformist denominations he was as much at home as he was with those of his own church. And a remarkable body of men the non-conforming ministers of Liverpool at that time were. Foremost among them in age and reputation was the venerable

Dr. Raffles. Large of body, placid and benignant in countenance, and cordial in manner, he was never, as he himself once said, ten minutes in the company of any one without seeking to make him the happier for his presence. With an ample store of anecdotes, which he told with wonderful dramatic power, he was the best of company, and to the younger brethren around him he was as affectionate as a father to his sons. Next to him in age, and not even second to him in influence, was John Kelly, a man of unbending integrity and noble courage, with eyes that flashed a fiery earnestness, and at the same time a voice that shook, especially in prayer, with the quaver of tenderness. Then came Charles M. Birrell, precise and somewhat stately in appearance and manner, but with a heart as true as steel, and as tender as it was true. Not very approachable at first, his friendship was rather difficult to gain, but when it was gained it was abiding. He had cultivated his taste without sacrificing his power, and combined the utmost gentleness of demeanour with the greatest firmness of character. He proved how true it is that the strongest natures, when cultured, take the finest polish, and his genuineness as a man was equalled only by his wisdom as a counsellor. There, too, was Hugh Stowell Brown, blunt, honest, rough, who always called a spade a spade, and who by his lectures to the working-men of Liverpool had shown himself a man of power. Nor must I forget Joseph Welsh, the recluse of Canning Street, who moved in his own eccentric orbit, but had for his ruling passion the salvation of men, and with all his peculiarities succeeded above many in the attainment of the end which he always held before him.

Among these and others Graham held a place that was distinctively his own. Different from them all, as they were different from each other—for as one has well said, every true man is a *ἄπαξ λεγόμενον*—he sustained a peculiar relationship to each. With Dr. Raffles he was especially affectionate. He delighted to do him honour, enjoyed his stories, and listened eagerly to his numerous accounts of the preachers of a former generation, and the tales he told of adventures and experiences in travel in the days when as yet railways were unheard of in England and on the Continent. It was amusing to be with them both at one of Raffles's breakfast parties, and to mark how Graham, who thoroughly believed that "the excellence in conversation is to furnish the occasion," and who knew most of his stories well, would gently lead the talk in such a direction as to suggest the telling of the best of them; or how, after an adjournment into the study, he would ask to see this autograph or that, and get the good old man to tell how he had come into the possession of some of his richest treasures, or to exhibit some of the wonderful feats of memory for which he was renowned. One morning of that sort I remember well, when Dr. Eadie of Glasgow, and Dr. Edmond of London, were of the party, which did not break up until the early afternoon. For Mr. Kelly Graham had a profound admiration, as a man whose watchword was duty (which he always pronounced "dooty"), and who had in him many of the qualities of the old Puritans; and it was a constant source of pleasure to him and to us all to see how the influence of time was clothing the rock with lichens and covering with mossy softness the hard edges which had been bare before. The vener-

able man was always noble, but in his latest years the fulness of his experience had mellowed his character to such a degree that he drew to himself the hearts of us all. To Birrell, Graham was especially drawn, and perhaps, at the date of my leaving Liverpool, Graham would have called him his closest friend. They had been much together, and had many tastes in common, though in some things they were exceedingly unlike. Thus, Birrell was great on the proprieties, but Graham left these very much to take care of themselves; and while the former was always scrupulous in his attire, the latter was careless to a fault in the matter of his personal appearance. But each had found out the treasure that was in the other, and they valued each other for that. With Brown, Graham was, in the days of their earliest intercourse, more frequently in the bantering mood than with the others, and his sallies in that line were always returned with interest. Many a duel of that sort have I heard between these two; but when they were both older men, and the shadows had fallen deep and dark over the home of Brown, it was seen that there had been tender love all through on both sides, for Brown had no comforter who was more frequently at his side, or more warmly appreciated by him, than Graham.

When I went first to Liverpool, the Nonconformist brethren were accustomed to have a monthly meeting with each other, which was a sort of prelude to a Union prayer meeting that was held in the church of him who was the host for the night. But owing to the changed circumstances of the city the prayer meeting was given up, and for a time we had no rallying centre. After a while, however, a monthly dinner was inaugu-

rated by some ten or twelve of us. There were no papers read and no discussions carried on, but though now and then we talked of how we were to act on some great public question, the object we set before us was simply the enjoyment of two or three hours of social fellowship, and these occasions were greatly relished by us all. By this time, too, others had come into our circle. Raffles had gone, but Mellor, bright, buoyant, bold, was in his place ; and after him came Pearson, no unworthy successor of two such men. Hasson of Wavertree, the most genial and lovable of companions, Robarts of Everton, ever the same in his calm, evenly-honest kindness, and others, were among our regular attendants. It was a rare treat to be a member of such a band, and I never knew how much it was to me until the Atlantic rolled between us. But now most of them are separated from me by another ocean, and have passed to another land ; and of those who remain unto this present only two or three continue in Liverpool. We had no specially spiritual exercises (so-called) at these meetings, and yet, over and above the pleasantness of our intercourse, they resulted in much good. They widened our hearts, we forgot that we belonged to different denominations, and realised that we were all members of the one Church of Christ. Above all, we got so to know, and understand, and love each other, that controversies between the Nonconformists in Liverpool were almost unknown, and ministerial jealousies, heart-burnings, rivalries, and the like, were things of which we had no experience.

After I left Liverpool for New York in 1872, my intercourse with Mr. Graham was, of course, less frequent than it had been during the happy years of our

common connection with that city. We exchanged letters, indeed, but neither of us was a very good correspondent, and so we depended mainly on our personal communion during my frequent visits to "the old country." On these occasions we were always together, except when imperative duties, either on the one side or the other, interfered. Especially delightful were our seasons of travel in each other's society. The "thorn in the flesh," to which I have alluded, was always aggravated by sustained, close, and long continued labour, so he was compelled to seek frequent change of scene, and to take many journeys for relaxation. He had, besides, a great taste for travel, and his extensive reading fitted him for getting the greatest amount of enjoyment out of it. He commonly sought to go with a genial companion, and those who accompanied him at such times have the sunniest memories of their experiences. Indeed, so rich and rare was his fellowship, that the scenes in which they were with him are now haloed for them with a glory that is not of earth. They cannot think of them but in connection with him, and as they look back upon their travels with him they are constrained to say that for much of what they saw they were indebted to him. As Dr. Macleod has said, "All who have had the great privilege of travelling with our friend in scenes which history has made famous, will recall the eager interest with which he visited the memorable places, and the wonderful touches in conversation by which he illuminated the past, and made it live again for his companion."

Of the many occasions on which during my visits to Europe I went off with him for a season of travel, I remember best that in the summer of 1879, when by appoint-

ment we met at Vienna and spent a fortnight with each other on the Continent. It was the year of his Moderatorship of the Presbyterian Church in England, the year, too, of the somewhat tardy recognition of his merits by the Glasgow University in the conferring on him of the degree of D.D., and he had been sent along with others to the Austrian capital to adjust some difficulty which had arisen in the Jewish mission of the English Presbyterians there. I recall with vividness his artistic skill and taste as manifested by his criticisms on many of the paintings in the Lichtenstein and Belvedere galleries; his historical knowledge, as evinced by the frequency with which he alluded to events in the far past which were associated with some of the places which we visited; and his singular liking for seeking out and directing attention to things of which no guide-book made any mention. But the most Graham-like incident of our brief sojourn at Vienna was connected with our visit to the Votiv Kirche, and though the story is at my own expense, I must tell it here, because of the glimpse of him which it furnishes. This church, built by the present Emperor of Austria in commemoration of his escape from assassination in 1853, and consecrated only a few months or perhaps weeks before our visit, is a noble Gothic structure, in the erection and decoration of which everything that art could design, and skill could execute, and money could command, has been combined. Naturally, therefore, we were eager to see it; but when we entered it, we found that a large congregation was assembled, and the Mass was being celebrated. In the choir gallery, immediately above the entrance, a company of musicians with instruments

of brass were sending forth most exquisite music. This produced on all three of us (for one of my sons was of the party) a marvellous effect. We stood as if rooted to the spot, every nerve within us tingling with emotion, and ere long the tears were flowing unbidden from our eyes. We remained until the music ceased, but we could not think of disturbing the congregation by making a tour of inspection through the building then, and we quietly left. When we got outside, just as we were descending the steps at the front entrance, Graham, with one of those sudden transitions from grave to gay which were so characteristic of him, turned upon me and said, "Well, Taylor, I'll never say another word against wind instruments as long as I live, not even against *you*!" The fun of the implication in the last words, and the queer appearance which he presented, as with the tear-channels still wet upon his cheeks he laughed one of his merriest laughs, were irresistible, and may easily be imagined by those who knew him well.

Another fancy which he indulged was that of searching for, and looking upon, the graves of those who had risen to eminence either in art, or literature, or religious life. It seemed somehow as if he knew them better after he had looked upon their sepulchres; or was it that some influence came upon him there akin to that which once came from the grave of Elisha? I cannot tell. But so it was, that wherever we went he had to visit some one's grave. He spent a long afternoon with Joseffi—the father of the pianist—in hunting for the grave of Mozart, and he came back to the hotel, weary of foot, but light of heart, shouting "Heureka! Heureka! I have found it; I have found

it." At Saltzburg, nothing could keep him from going to see Mozart's birth-place, and visiting the tomb of that half-philosopher, half-quack, Paracelsus. At Rapperschwyl, in Switzerland, he would have taken a boat, even in the twilight, and rowed out to the island in the Lake of Zurich on which Ulrich von Hütten is buried; but when the landlord at the hotel assured him that it was quite impossible to identify the spot, he was dissuaded from his purpose. At Basel, not content with looking at the grave and monument of Erasmus in the cathedral, nothing would do but he must visit the house in which he lived, and stand in the chamber in which he died; and he looked on me with mingled pity and contempt because I could not get up enthusiasm enough to follow him into the house, but remained patiently outside. During his second visit to America in 1880, the same trait was noticeable in him. At Philadelphia, he found the grave of his townsman Alexander Wilson, the ornithologist, and as the result of diligent inquiry and skilful negotiation, he secured an autograph copy of that author's humorous poem "Watty and Meg," which he presented to the Coats' Library of Paisley, where it is now preserved. During the same sojourn in America he made an interesting visit to New England, and having occasion to write a postal to my son, who had been with us at Vienna, and had often rallied him on being "Old Mortality" the younger, he added this characteristic postscript:—"P.S.—I have seen since I left you some very interesting graves."

But I must return to our Continental tour. At Zurich he somewhat surprised the keeper of the public library by asking to see certain things which he

knew were there, but which without his persistency we should never have seen at all. The portrait of Zwingli and his study Bible, covered with manuscript annotations; autograph letters of Lady Jane Grey, Archbishop Cranmer, and others to Bullinger, and other similar subjects of interest, were thus brought under our inspection by him. At Lucerne, in the Roman Catholic Church of Maria Hilf, in which the Presbyterian services were held, he acted as precentor, and Mr. Stalker, then of Kirkcaldy, now of Glasgow, preached; and when we came to Paris he showed us more of the old city on the other side of the Seine, and told us more about many of its queer places, than any handbook which we could have purchased would have done.

But though his interest in places was greatly intensified by their associations with men, and especially with men who had become famous in the world's history, it must not be supposed that he was unmoved by scenery for its own sake. On the contrary, he had an intense delight in it, and seemed sometimes to lose himself in it altogether. As we journeyed from Ragatz to Rapperschwyl we came along the side of Lake Walenstadt, just after the sun had gone down behind the mountains, and while the evening shadows were falling on the mirror-like surface of the water. He seemed for the moment to be absorbed in its contemplation. Everything else was forgotten. There was no talk, no fun, no wit, just then. He stretched himself far out of the window until I was almost afraid that he would fall out; and when at length the darkness came, he sank back into his seat exclaiming, "Dim and dimmer, and the glory done." He was similarly

moved a few days afterwards while we sailed up the Lake of Lucerne. He had often seen it before, but he said it had always the same effect upon him, and he sat in silence as if transfixed, while he let the beauty of the lake and the grandeur of the mountains fill his soul. It reminded me of the poet's words—

“In such access of mind, in such high hour  
Of visitation from the living God,  
Thought was not ; in enjoyment it expired.”

I have said that he was particularly fond of prying into out-of-the-way places in large cities, and of that an interesting illustration may be given in a little episode of his life in London, for which I am indebted to my friend and his, Dr. Walter Morison, who thus writes to me: “One of my latest walks with him was interesting. In the course of a restful stroll in London, such as he sometimes took, we got into Holborn. ‘Brook Street’ caught our eye, and Graham told how Chatterton had lodged there on coming to London. Then we saw ‘Ely Place,’ and a painted direction told us of ‘St. Ethelreda’s Church’ being near. Following the direction, we came upon the building, which we found to be picturesque and ancient. It had somehow got into the hands of the Roman Catholics. Passing inside to look round, we saw an intellectual looking elderly priest in his biretta. By and by we spoke, the father proving courteous. The priest easily enough knew us to be Scotch, and when we told him we were Presbyterian ministers, he said he had been ‘taking stock of us, and thought so.’ Graham, of course, took the lead in the conversation, and drew out the fact that it was Father Lockhart we had encoun-

tered, of the family of the Lockharts of Lee. He had been in the Oxford movement, and was now in charge of St. Ethelreda's. We were invited into the house, and finally had tea, and talk about history, theology, and philosophy, Graham characteristically carrying off with him in the end a gift of a work of the father's, a philosophical treatise from the Italian, edited by him."

But now these reminiscences must come to an end. The last time I saw my friend was in the month of July 1887. I arrived in London on Saturday evening, the ninth of that month, intending to proceed early the next week to Homburg. Before I had been ten minutes in the hotel, Graham was in my room. He stayed with me till nearly ten o'clock; and arranged to meet me early next day and accompany me to morning service in the Metropolitan Tabernacle, that we might hear Mr. Spurgeon—which we did. The sermon of the great preacher that day was peculiarly tender. His text was Jacob's blessing of the sons of Joseph; and as he had himself been during the week in the Essex pulpit that used to be occupied by his venerable grandfather, his discourse was redolent of the experience through which there he had passed. It touched us both very deeply, and at the close we went in to shake hands with the preacher. After a brief but cordial greeting we went down with him to the communion service, at which Mr. Spurgeon seated us with the elders on the platform. He asked me to "give thanks" over the bread, and Dr. Graham to "give thanks" over the cup—and at the close of all offered a brief prayer himself. We had a delightful season; and after it was over, Graham came with

me to the hotel, dined, and spent an hour or two. Then I saw him take the omnibus to go to his friend Dr. Edmond, for whom, in the absence of his colleague, he was to preach that evening, and I went to worship in the Westbourne Church with my friend Dr. Morison. We hoped to see each other after my return from a three weeks' trip on the Continent, but our plans were frustrated, and so *that* was our farewell. We had spoken our last word to each other—

“ Ah ! little thought we 'twas our last.”

But it *is* pleasant to think that the table of the Lord was almost the last place at which we were together on earth. May we meet at the table of celestial communion, to be for ever with the Lord !

I cannot think of him as dead ; and in the highest sense he is not dead, for to quote from the first book he gave me—

“ Saints that seem to die in earth's rude strife,  
Only win double life ;  
They have but left our weary ways  
To live in memory here, in heaven by love and praise.”

## II.

*JOHN WICLIF.*

THERE are four supreme names in English history. These are—Wiclif, Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton. They touched very different points in our national growth. While each stands alone in the depth and breadth of his influence, Chaucer and Shakespeare curiously resemble each other, while Wiclif and Milton as singularly complete the other half of the intellectual circle. Coming down to the interesting occasion of this evening, the opening of another session of our Theological College, it would show an ungrateful want of memory did we, as Presbyterians, forget Wiclif on his fifth centenary, to whom primarily we owe the first outbreak in England of our Scriptural freedom and work. I do not wonder that Archbishop Trench says: “We members of the Anglican Church may be thankful that the Reformation was not in his time, nor of his doing. From a Church reformed under the auspices of Wiclif—of one who was properly the spiritual ancestor of the Puritans—the Catholic element would in good part, perhaps altogether, have disappeared.” But I as little wonder that John Milton, breathing the same keen air of liberty, speaks thus: “If the stiffnecked obstinacy of our prelates

had not obstructed Wiclif's sublime and exalted spirit, the names of the Bohemians, Huss and Hieronymus, and even of Luther and Calvin, would at this day have been buried in obscurity, and the glory of having reformed our neighbours would have been ours alone." Such is the just place which the great Puritan poet gave to the first of Puritans in England, and the first of reformers in Europe. Great and surpassing, however, as his services were, there is not in him the personal charm, the irresistible suction felt by all last year during the third centenary of Luther. A few vivid touches of the man himself, of what we had in the immediate passions and humours of Luther, as well as in his stern, heroic conflicts, and in his noble spiritual victories would have given a warmth to the life of Wiclif, which, even with all the reverence and gratitude it wins, seems remote and unsympathetic. We miss, we crave for the living features of the man to light up the massive energy of the Reformer. Melchisedek-like he rises in the genesis of our Reformed Church, bringing costly and needed gifts in his hands, but with a solitude all around himself. Still, in that man we have one of our greatest patriots, our greatest Reformer, the one founder of that English prose literature that now educates the world, the first translator of that Divine Book which gave in care God's greatest thoughts to a rude dialect of Englishmen, and consecrated the English tongue for ever into a channel of that river of God that has made glad our whole history.

But from this year Wiclif will be known as he has never been since he taught in Oxford and died at Lutterworth. Every manuscript in which he lies

buried five hundred years in many libraries will be printed for the first time, and there will be a resurrection of our great spiritual leader and benefactor.

Another name, dear to us all, is linked in my heart at this hour to that of Wiclif. Not the least of the reasons that have led me to this subject to-night is that our greatly-loved and ever-lamented principal, Dr. Lorimer, gave his last labour to translate and illustrate Lechler's "Life of Wiclif," and would, I believe, have done, had he lived, what I now attempt.

In the life of Wiclif there are two marked periods: first, that of a preparation that covered two-thirds of it; and, second, that of a work that crowded its last third. In these we have, with very few facts, yet a full biography of the man—the force he was—a mind and a force singularly compact and complete, and full of aggressive vitality to the very last.

Of the first part of his life we know tryingly little, but that little, like a small chink, lets us see the main lines on which he moves. The year and even the place of his birth are not quite settled. The year generally given is 1324, and would, I believe, never have been questioned, but that, dying, as we know certainly, in 1384, and at the age of sixty, it has been felt that a canvas so comparatively small does not allow space for his multifarious writings and deeds. This, however, will hardly hold. Duns Scotus dies at thirty-four, and leaves folios nearly equal in number and fulness of thought to those of Thomas Aquinas, who himself died when he was only forty-eight. And, indeed, any man writing so many hours a day, or, better still, talking so many hours a day, and fully reported, will throw out as much matter as would fill

an alarming library of folios, mercifully, as a rule, withheld from the public perusal: 1324 may therefore remain undisputed. It is interesting, moreover, as lying very nearly in the heart of a period in European, and especially Christian history, full of slow but decisive movements that grew into changes in all departments which sharply divide modern Europe from its mediæval phase. It was the commencement of new national languages and literatures. Dante died in 1321, and had, three years before Wiclif was born, embodied scholastic theology in the immortal form of his music and poetry; and also opened in plainest attacks the war against the papal supremacy. Fifty years before Wiclif was born, Thomas Aquinas died, in 1274. Place Dante and Aquinas clearly before your mind, and you have the fullest strength of the mediæval and the mighty beginnings of the modern periods. Carry your eye down to 1483, all but one hundred years after the death of Wiclif in 1384, and you have the birth of Luther. So definitely does Wiclif's life lie between these two, Aquinas and Luther, that at once you feel the atmosphere and the conditions of his whole work.

Pass out of that sphere into another, and you come upon two events—one the greatest in the history of Scotland and the other the greatest in that of England. The battle of Bannockburn was fought in 1314, only ten years before Wiclif was born. It was a time when nations were fighting for freedom and independence. Again, in the very midtime of Wiclif's life, Cressy and Poitiers were fought, England's great victories over France, which spread the fame and intensified the independence of the country. It is not to

be wondered at that England, master of France, did not yield to the Papal supremacy, but threw off the right of the Pope over its temporal affairs. It was the same sense of abounding life, as of a universal spring, that woke up the genius of Chaucer as well as the piety of Wiclif. Chaucer was junior of Wiclif by twelve years, but died just twelve years after Wiclif, and at exactly the same age of sixty. Chaucer has the greatness of being the first to open up the well of English undefiled, and to charm with his fresh pictures the spirit of his countrymen. But Wiclif's place is greater still, for he opened up to his countrymen the well of religion undefiled, and gave to them the New Testament, with its unrivalled tales of Christ and His apostles. Wiclif came, then, at a fulness of the times, when a great reforming spirit was needed and was sent.

The place of his birth is certainly Yorkshire, and in it, near Wickliffe and Richmond, a part of England which, as we know from Scott's "*Rokeby*," bearing the name of the next parish, is one most exquisite for stream, hill, and glen. But though some have dwelt on this, it never coloured, much less moulded, the genius of Wiclif; and for the reason that he was Wiclif, meant for a special work—that of a great spiritual reformer—and not Chaucer, all instinct with the feeling of English landscape, and therefore our first creative poet. In this Wiclif was like Calvin, who resembled him in so many points of doctrine, polity, and spirit. Calvin sat in a study whence he gazed at Mont Blanc. But the sublime mountain never made his nerves thrill, and so not a single reference is given to it in his voluminous

writings. Herein is the full, flexible, irresistible charm and superiority of Luther. A bird on its twig, a golden ear of wheat, caught his eye and heart; and out of the one came a song of spiritual joy, and out of the other a harvest of divine consolation. But God gives to every man his own work; that of Wiclif was defined, and often it needed to be defiant thinking, put in words that were barbed with the passion of conviction, and which easily became scornful. The edge of his sword was keenness itself—gleaming beauty or brilliant polish would not have added to his blow. It was, natural, therefore, that he was born in Yorkshire, where to this day the Scotchmen of England are born.

As for his earliest training, schools were at that time connected with every abbey and cathedral, and the abbey of Eggleston was near the boy. There he learned, as was the fashion, first the trivium, the three *trivial* studies of grammar, logic, and rhetoric; and thence rose, either at school or college, to the quadrivium, where he encountered arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music. These were the seven notes that formed the sweep of learning in those days. And in fact, if well taught, it does not so much matter what is taught to a young mind as that first it learns that it is a mind; and that then every knowledge is one that is not only itself to be brought out to the learner, but specially one that is to bring out, and so educate the learner more than teach the lesson.

We may easily take for granted that Wiclif would be one of the best learners in his school; and in token thereof we see him in his fourteenth year sent across the wild country, often without any path, to Oxford. It was an early year, but it was a common one.

Luther, Calvin, Knox, went when mere boys to college. It could not be otherwise when we are told that in the generation before Wiclif there were 30,000 students in Oxford, and earlier still 40,000 in Paris. Of course, multitudes must have been boys, though, on the other hand, men did not grudge twenty years to the college, and thought these all too little for a perfect training.

It could not well be otherwise in those days. Lads had few, some of them hardly any books at all; a Latin psalter, or a few pages of Augustine, one or two chronicles, and there you have a library that was counted sufficient for a monastery. I have now and again thought how many books had Paul left at Troas, which he was so anxious to recover? Not more, I imagine, than could now be bought at some book-stall for half-a-crown, or even less. These enormous crowds of students could, however, all use their ears with one professor, when they had not even one book for their eyes. Melanchthon, in the village of Wittemberg, gave lectures on Greek exegesis to 2000 students. Abelard, however, had 10,000 hearers, and those drawn after him into an obscure village of France.

It was certainly a good time for the Docentes and Regentes—the men who are with us called only professors. Now, however, a professor does one of the very best parts of his work when he inspires students to read thorough and living books in his department, and more when, with illuminating spirit, he himself goes before them into the heart of seminal thoughts and creative eras. And as to the students, they gained in depth what they lost in diffusion, as a professor of enkindling enthusiasm, Thomas Chalmers, once said

in regard to another subject. To listen to Thomas Aquinas was an education itself into a noble spirit and a complete science. And then to discuss point by point among the students, as was their fashion, raised each man into an educator of himself and of his fellows. After all, the most quickening education comes from other young fervent spirits, or from a magnetic teacher—a Thomas Chalmers, a Sir William Hamilton, an August Neander—than from the million volumes of the British Museum.

In Oxford Wiclif was engaged in this fruitful work in Merton College. This college, one of the stateliest in Oxford to this day, bore at that time among its colleges to the students the relation Lincoln College held four hundred years afterwards in 1740, as it trained the new Reformers of England, the Wesleys and Whitefield, and which Oriel College held in 1840, when John Henry Newman dominated over it, and was the living breath of a religious movement totally unlike either that of Wesley or of Wiclif.

Merton had trained many of the foremost minds of England, and it is interesting to mark how the spirit of his predecessors came to life again in Wiclif. It was the college of Grostête, the earliest of patriotic churchmen, who championed England against Rome; of Roger Bacon, first of English physicists, who inspired Wiclif for all the physical science of the time; of Duns Scotus, next to Aquinas, the greatest of the schoolmen; of Occam, who, contemporary of our Reformer for a few years, was the most vigorous opponent of papal supremacy, and was well succeeded by Wiclif; but, above all, of Thomas Bradwardine, who might possibly have been his teacher, and whose Augustinian

and Pauline doctrines of God's grace and sovereignty were the vital elements of his teaching, as well as later the mighty instruments of his reformation.

But outside of the University, yet filling it with its atmosphere, were the uneasy movements of the times in political, social, and, above all, religious matters. The mediæval age had exhausted itself. Instead of Aquinas and Bonaventura among thinkers, Dominic and St. Francis among saints and founders of societies, Hildebrande and Innocent III. among Popes, were men who succeeded but did not replace them. The new times required, and would make new men—new thinkers, new saints, new reformers—all new and in the true sense heads of the Church.

The next fact, among one or two statements that are controverted, is that in 1360 we find him Master of Balliol. He must have been well known and sufficiently appreciated to reach this position. The Balliols, moreover, lived in that region from which Wiclif came, and it is interesting to visit Balliol College, if only to see the original portrait of its greatest master, as also the old muniment chest of Devorgilla, the wife of Balliol, who founded this college in his honour, as also founded at New Abbey, near Dumfries, the Sweetheart—Dulce Cor—Abbey to the husband she loved—all the more, we can believe, when Scotland preferred Robert Bruce before him to be her king and leader.

What Wiclif did as Master of Balliol we do not know. A man may be working hard, with noble courage and with deepest success, though it is never reported or telegraphed. A man, moreover, of thirty-six is still growing, and may only be beginning to be

influential. Wiclif was slowly equipping himself in silence, or rather his Master was, for a long, busy future he little imagined. Such is the way of the Supreme Master of those He makes under Him masters of others, that He chooses those who themselves, in His might, have chosen Divine ends and obscure preparations, that, in His time, they may achieve them in the sight of all. Moreover, as a teacher, he was multiplying himself in other minds, who, when the time came, would work by his side.

It was so, till the year 1366 summoned him forth. At his thirty-eighth year, we have said, Wiclif was getting himself equipped. But before he enters on his life-work, this is the place to mark the worker. His equipment was on two opposite sides, and to rise to the secret of the strong pulse that beat through all his life and made it one, his equipment was one. This lies in the name universally given to him, and to him alone, of Doctor Evangelicus. His learning was dyed deep in the Gospel. It was in his heart, for his own life, in its intensity, simplicity, supremacy. And hence, while a noted destroyer, a polemic, he was at heart a constructor, and after the lines of Christ, a theologian. This sent its life-blood to those departments of knowledge which fitted Wiclif for his peculiar work. First he was deep in the Fathers and the Schoolmen, and, indeed, was the last of the English, some say of all the schoolmen. From Augustine to Occam he knew the whole range of theological thinking, and compiled his own system of theology. Here he was the student, the Latinist, full of massive thoughts, as also of sharp distinctions, sapless aridities, weary divisions, and development. This, however,

gave him a great place, according to the confession of his enemies, among the learned and the thinkers.

But, second, he was equally a man of the people, of plain words and of mother-wit, a tribune as a patriot, a pamphleteer as a writer, a counsellor as a priest and pastor. It was this gift that has secured him his place in his lifetime as it has given him his lasting power. Both of these served his high devoutness, as well as his Scriptural doctrine. Both show him a man of insight and foresight, and that other sight, which is equally needed, the backsight, that knows well the past that it may reform well the future. Both gave him that weight of power, as well as that keenness of insight that lifted him above the contentions of the hour into the questions of the centuries; and hence there are in Wiclif seeds of truth and influence that are still reaching forward to fruit of which Wiclif did not dream, nor the ages after him have as yet gathered.

At length, when he was nearly forty-two years old, Wiclif was called to the public work, which lasted, with increasing and widening energy, till his life ended. It was at the same age that John Knox, the likeliest to him among all the reformers, was summoned to preach, and not till he was fifty-four did he enter on the Reformation of Scotland. Men such as Wiclif and Knox ripen slowly. They are in no hurry till God is ready, and then they are ready for God.

We note now in the last twenty years of Wiclif's life three distinct stages of work, and these rising above each other till the whole was complete. The first was ecclesiastical, the second moral, the third theological; and in these three he reverses the de-

cisions of the Papal Church—in the first setting aside the Papal supremacy, in the second the principles of monasticism, especially in the orders of Dominic and Francis, and in the third the basis and aim of the scholastic theology as represented by Thomas Aquinas. It was a mighty and manifold task, and sometimes one and again another part of it was encountered, but frequently the three, forming one system, were attacked all along the line.

The first appearance of Wiclif was as a patriotic ecclesiastical politician, and was at the express command of Edward III. Times had greatly changed since the noble saint and thinker, Anselm, had encountered William Rufus in support of the supremacy of the Pope. There was no Anselm in England with an intellectual and spiritual supremacy to ennoble any cause, and happily there was no William Rufus; so when Edward and his barons, and the whole Commonwealth, refused, after thirteen years' neglect, to refund the tax which King John had ignominiously sworn to pay the Pope in token of the Pope's temporal power, the Pope had to retreat unrefunded. Wiclif was called in as spokesman of all the orders in the country. He was well skilled in canon law, and his skill had been sharpened by his losing the wardenship of Canterbury Hall on an appeal, which lasted for years, to the Pope. For the first time he brought out those principles on what he called "Divine Dominion," which became the second Magna Charta, greater than the first, of English liberty in Church and State. He maintained that God gives dominion from Himself of His grace to the Pope in one department, to the King in another. Neither King nor Pope is supreme, but God only. Out of this grew

easily the independence of the individual conscience—the first note of all liberty, as also the independence of the State in relation to the Church, and, of course, of the Church in relation to the State. Such principles have room for large applications to this day. Wiclif expressly condemned State endowments, and thought, with Dante, that Constantine's giving a patrimony to the Church was the beginning of all corruption. Wiclif was one of those dangerous and uncomfortable men who go wherever their logic carries them, and logic will sometimes drive a man farther than a point where he will find followers.

The House of Lords pronounced against the Papal supremacy, especially in a form so obnoxious, which drew upon their money. In this they were in perfect harmony with the Government and the House of Commons. The report given of seven of their reasons is blunt and downright, and it is believed by many that the first reporter of public speeches was Wiclif himself. The contention afterwards took other forms against provisors and *præmunire*, that is, claims of the Papal court to appoint bishops, and have English causes appealed from England to Rome. One of the most remarkable parts of Wiclif's life was connected with this matter. Sent to Bruges, 1371, to negotiate with the representatives of Rome on these matters touching the honour and rights of England, he learned more of the intrigues and mercenariness of the spiritual power than even he had imagined, and with it he learned, as Luther did, from Rome itself, to be its inexorable foe. The Oxford student and professor thus became the European statesman. At this time he was in the daily company of John of Gaunt, brother of the King, and

being patron also of Chaucer, it is very probable that Chaucer and Wiclif met together. The whole treatment of the Papacy by both is exactly in the same spirit; the same also as prevailed in their famous contemporary, the author of the first English poem, *Piers the Ploughman*. These three men represented the peasantry, the court, and the Church. It is not at all unlikely that Chaucer had Wiclif as his original when he painted, in ever fresh and spiritual colours, the portrait of the poor parson, which every minister and student should hang up on the walls of the innermost chamber of his memory and imagination. But the sympathy of Chaucer, and also of John of Gaunt, went no further than the natural and social principles of Wiclif's reform. Chaucer, with all his openness of mind, was not inspired with the noblest emotions of the Gospel, and as Wiclif went to the quick in his attacks on Roman doctrine, specially that of Transubstantiation, John of Gaunt left him unprotected. I know nothing so brave and heroic in Wiclif than his delivering his soul of obnoxious truth, keeping his conscience and his God, and losing his patron. Nor, on the other hand, did he modify his principles when the rebellion of John Ball and Wat Tyler raged with murderous and socialistic violence. The noble might leave him, and the mob too. It was the war of the peasants, in England as in Germany, following the proclamation of God's gift of freedom, and therefore the limits of freedom, as well as its extent, had to be adjusted.

We advance to the second part of Wiclif's work. It grew in some measure out of the first, as is the law of healthy, organic growth. This was his attack on the

Mendicant Orders, and especially those of St. Dominic and St. Francis. It was only 150 years since these two apostles of the Mediæval Church had become its reformers. Hating the immorality and ignorance on all sides in Church and State, they went on the old lines, shaped their treatment to the new situation, and called into existence bodies of men who were to carry out absolutely the poverty, purity, and obedience of Jesus Christ. The one founded a preaching order to meet the ignorance of the period, and especially whatsoever leant to heresy; the other founded an order to meet its immorality by holding up a literal copy of the life of the Divine Lord. No one can help admiring the splendid Spanish fire of St. Dominic, and who can fail to love the celestial courage and disinterestedness of St. Francis, when he binds up the wounds of lepers, and visits the outcasts, and cries out in his divine yearning, "My love is not love"? (*Amor mio non est amatos*). But such glorious aims were stifled by the bulk of their followers, and the corruption of the best became the worst. St. Francis would have gone with Wiclif for a new reform, and, I hope, might have learned from him its true and lasting principles. Wiclif scourged unsparingly the abuse, but he did better: he opened up the Divine truths that would work their cure. Luther only repeated in his day what Wiclif now proclaimed. Religion is not a matter of external separation by absolute vow from the world and its God-ordained relationships in home and city; it is the very life of all redeemed and renewed souls, that turns all secular things into things sacred when the consecration of a holy heart lies upon them; therefore, Christians are not of two classes, the secular and re-

ligious, but all Christians are of one class—servants of Christ. He does not, indeed, even once use the word, the universal priesthood of believers, by which Luther stamped and demonstrated for ever his central truth, but he denies the validity of sacraments administered by wicked priests. He rises even to the Pope, and in the view of the Schism during which two Popes ruled, he denounced even the existence of a Pope as Supreme Head of the Church. But his logic went farther, and he did not shun to prove from Scripture that there was no separate order of bishops. He put before the English mind what is almost universally admitted now even by Episcopalians, that the words bishop and elder in the New Testament are interchangeable, and in one sentence mark the same men and the same functions. He chose, moreover, for his Order of Poor Priests, not only ordained men, but pious laymen, and sent them abroad to preach. By these priests Wiclif not only destroys the validity of Popish orders, but becomes the predecessor and parent of Presbyterianism, of Independence, and of Wesley's Order of Lay Preachers.

So Wiclif reconstructs the Church of Christ by building it on Christ Himself, and on His own great principle: "One is your Master, and all ye are brethren."

There are only two sayings of Wiclif recorded, but unfortunately neither is genuine. Both, however, bear his image and superscription. The first occurs in his battle with the Mendicants. One day certain friars forced themselves on Wiclif, who lay in bed, seemingly near death. As they called on him to recant his errors, he was raised up and cried out as he looked sternly at them, "I shall not die, but live and declare the evil deeds of the friars." This was Scriptural, and

like Wiclif. It just wants the touch of humour that draws us to John Knox when he said, as they would compel him to kiss the image of the Virgin, and he pitched it overboard, "Let her ladyship swim." But like many other true stories, it is a story, but not a true one. The other anecdote is in a higher strain. When excommunicated and silenced he cried out, "I trowe that in the end the truth will conquer." It is a brave watchword, and is to be found in substance in one of his pamphlets. It is like Luther's defiant and humble cry at Worms in every point but one, that there is no evidence that he said it.

Multitudes of his pamphlets, in Latin and also in English, did their busy and sure work among all classes. These still lie on the shelves of libraries in Vienna, Prague, Oxford, and Dublin; but we need them at this hour, and editors, with the help of the witchcraft of printing, will call up before England her first judge and prophet, clothed in his mantle as in past days.

This leads us easily to the third and last period of Wiclif. By this time Oxford, his own University, where for years he ruled supreme, excommunicated him. This is the distinction of all greatly independent and disinterested souls. But such conquer the long centuries in losing the passing days. Generations call those blessed whom their own generation rejected. John of Gaunt had deserted him, the people had been in some measure alienated by the fury of the Wat Tyler insurrection, the nobles did not like the man whom the mob quoted, and the Pope excommunicated, and not for the first time. He went to spend his last six years in the quiet retreat and obscure toils of his

Lutterworth parish; and God went with him, and allowed no man to touch him. Priest of Lutterworth, with his one or two hundred souls to watch, he never ceased to be the patriot of England and the minister of the Church Universal, and he felt that now he could do for all work he never had time to do before. It is the way of God to give His busiest and best servants periods, especially when nearing the end of their life, of enforced pause in their ordinary work, that by its very absence they may accomplish some vaster service, Moses in Midian and on Mount Sinai, Paul in Arabia and in the Roman prison, John in Patmos, Luther in Wartburg, Bunyan in Bedford gaol, Milton in the narrower and darker prison of blindness, Thomas Chalmers on his sick-bed for months—these and multitudes more rose in depths of solitude, sorrow, and disappointment, to heights of vision and communion which made their hearts burn within them, and touched their lips with fire that should kindle the world.

Along with more passing controversial work, Wiclif set himself to do as his last works two things. The first—and this I believe he deemed his most important task—was to write out his “Sum of Theology” (*Summa Theologicæ*), and leave his fully-organised system of religious thought as a legacy to the world. It was a vast and minute edifice of thought, and has been called the equal, while it is the predecessor of the greatest English book of theology, “The Ecclesiastical Polity” of Hooker. His *Trialogus* is the only systematised portion of his theology which is as yet printed, but his *Summa* will, at some early date, fill, and for the first time, four large printed volumes.

Time is not left to enter on any of its details. It

is enough to say that it contains his final judgment on the doctrine of Transubstantiation, in which he attacked the alleged change of substance into accident, and declared the bread, after consecration, to be bread still. Herein he went far ahead of Luther, and is less confusing than even the clear and conclusive Calvin. Still he holds to some sort of real presence of the Lord in the very elements. The most strenuous and honest thinker is sure in some point to show his limits of independent thought, and to prove that he is still the child of his time. On the great principle of justification by faith, Wiclif, though he holds it as every Christian—even Romanist Christian—mind implicitly holds it for his hope and for his strength, had not attained to the clearness of statement and supremacy of importance it obtains in Luther. He taught very much the doctrine of Augustine, as also, in the main, that of Anselm, Bernard, and Aquinas. Possibly, not having fought for his spiritual peace so sternly and so long as Luther did, he had not forced upon him the Gospel principle which alike saves and sanctifies sinners. This was not given to him, and so, not striking at the heart of the Reformation, as well as being a century before its date, he missed the great honour of giving the truth back, after the corruption of centuries, clear, urgent, and creative, to the Church and the world.

Whatever Wiclif might have thought of his “Sum of Theology,” and the gathering up at eventide of the sheaves of the many fields of his thought into their garner, Another was purposing some better thing for him and from him. We are told in the first printed edition of his translation of the New Testament that he sent forth the first edition in or near 1380. It is

imperfect in many points, but it is perfect in this, that for the first time the whole of the New Testament was translated into English. Bede, Alfred, and others had in the past done good work, but not such complete work as Wiclif. The book was condemned time after time by Synod and by Parliament. The whole Bible—the Old as well as New Testament—was translated before he died, but the New Testament is believed to be the work of Wiclif. Tradition assigns this honour to him; and it is full of his spirit and style. Indeed, it is in brighter, more felicitous, fertile, flexible English than any of his own English pamphlets. Love had taught him the strength of fit, and the beauty of fair clothing for God's thoughts. Ignorant both of Hebrew and Greek, as most of the learned were at that time, it is taken from Jerome's Vulgate Version. Still he penetrates, with his keenness of brain and heart, to the finer and fuller meanings of the original, and as a piece of English prose, it worthily preludes all its magnificent successors—remains itself a masterpiece in idiom and inspiration, is the English basis, along with the Greek original, which Tyndale used, and on which he built up that translation of the New Testament which, with the Old Testament touched by others, is unequalled in the Authorised Version for its homely tenderness, its graphic felicity, its heart-wrung cries of joy and of grief, its august simplicity and sublimity of human devotion and Divine perfection. So well selected by Wiclif is the diction, that comparatively few of its words have become obsolete, and it has been affirmed that, read to an audience of fellow-Yorkshiremen at this hour, it is almost entirely intelligible. And what an unequalled contri-

bution it has been to the wealth of English thought and life in their highest regions! To be the first to roll away the stone from the mouth of the Well of Life is an honour that belongs only to the first who achieved it; and higher than all honours of genius, courage, discovery, or invention, rises the honour of putting into men's daily words, and into the hands of the sinful and the sad, the saintly and the triumphant, the redeeming and everlasting truths and consolations of God.

Wiclif was now near the end of all his toils. The long and wearing studies and struggles of his life palsied him two years before his death. But the spirit was left untouched, and he clung to his oar and sped forward the great cause. Silently moving among the fields and lanes of Lutterworth, he organised and sent forth his missionaries, called Poor Priests. Ever at his work, and in the midst of his people, he is struck with the disease of which, in two days, and on the last day of 1384, he died. It was the end of a great life, but it was the beginning of a greater work. The Lollards, above all John Huss and the Bohemian Reformation; the noblest among the English Reformers, Ridley, Hooper, and Latimer, were the children of his spirit; and Luther caught, through Huss, sight of his splendid heroism and Divine doctrine. Scotland's Reformation grew both in Ayrshire and Galloway, for here the Lollards had preached, and the brave Covenanters were but Scottish Lollards of the seventeenth century.

Let us conclude with two noble lessons. One is that a work wrought in God and for Christ and souls never dies. The handful of seed may be hidden, but

it will surely come forth in golden light, and shake like Lebanon. God buries His workmen, said John Wesley, but carries on His work. It was so even with Him who worked unto death on the cross, and lay in the grave. But this was but a momentary hiding of His life of resurrection and pentecost. And after the same likeness are all His servants shaped and transfigured.

And the other lesson is that this is endless. The man who, poor, palsied, and lonely, died in Lutterworth, now lives in the deepest heart of England, and through England, of the world. The lonely and weak thought that God gave to him is become the king of innumerable souls.

Let us students and professors especially lay these things to heart. Each has given him a work to do. It may be a work public as that of Wiclif in Oxford, or obscure as that in Lutterworth. It may in future days be in a city or in a village; to tens or to hundreds or to thousands: enough, and far more than enough. With it strength will be given us to do it, and after all weariness and failings, at length will come to us the hearing of the "Well done," and the sight of the Beatific vision.

## III.

*LUTHER—THE MAN.*

THERE is, perhaps, I might almost say certainly, not another man whose personality is, after four centuries, so quick with life, and whose warm breath of influence we feel as if he were still with us, as Martin Luther. The unworn magnetism of his rich nature thrills across these many years; and thrills none more than such young enthusiastic souls of students as are now before me. This is the theme that has fallen to my share on this interesting occasion.

Of course we feel all the while that Luther stands out in his greatness from the background of the most memorable epoch in the history of Europe, or of the world, since that of Christianity itself. For the Reformation, reaching as it did confessedly to the deepest spiritual life of men, thereby opened up a new and noble life in all other departments; literary, scientific, social, commercial, and political. And this remains the same, whether you regard the Reformation as part of the Renaissance tidal wave, or as taking its rise and force from a higher and diviner source. It gathered spoils indeed from all the other moral and intellectual influences of the time, but itself, like the original Christianity of which it was the revival, owed its being, not to the

noblest thinking of Greece or Rome, to whose paganism it stood in fact in opposition ; but to thoughts and deeds that came from above.

And of this truth Luther is in his whole life a crowning instance and evidence. We shall see this clearly when we look at the Reformer himself, as at once the inspiration and embodiment of this new creative power.

Before coming close up to Luther you can measure him, as the greatest of the Primates of the Reformation, when compared with his illustrious compeers. There he stands, a colossal figure, an inexhaustible force at the doorway of the Reformation, and none approaches him in native power and conspicuous deeds till we reach the last in the Reformation history—John Calvin. They were two totally opposite men ; the one, like Napoleon, with his enormous mass and momentum of passionate genius, ever moved himself, and so ever moving others ; the other, coming later, like Wellington, cool, comprehensive, patient, with prodigious staying force, and thereby gathering up the last spoils of victory at the close of the great spiritual campaign. There is no second that can be named along with them ; but still Calvin does not come so close to and go so far in our hearts as Luther. Calvin is like a remote snow-white peak, shooting far up into the sky, severe, lofty, and alone. Luther is more like a range of sunny or shaded mountain tops, shaping valleys with rich meadows and sweet homes under its brave and broad embrace. And when you put Luther beside Melancthon, Zwingli, or Knox, you feel instinctively that a certain aboriginal abundance and attraction belongs to him, as to none of those three, however

noble men. Luther seen among the largest souls of his time arrests the eye, as in the range of the Pyrenees the Pic du Midi does among the lesser though lofty mountains that are grouped around.

Drawing the lines closer to our own days and in his own beloved country, there are reckoned among the Germans only two supreme men—Luther and Goethe. The placing of these two names beside each other, with the opposite spiritual and intellectual movements they severally represent, makes you feel that the Renaissance and the Reformation are as movements, contrasts, rather than companions, to each other. Goethe had in him, with fullest consciousness and endeavour, the very soul, and that in its most finished and modern form, of the Renaissance; but it would be hard indeed to show that Luther, and with him the Reformation, were of the same spiritual lineage. The struggles of intellectual passion in Goethe's "Faust" could indeed be easily comprehended by the Luther of the Erfurt Monastery; but the celestial liberty from doubt and passion which was given to Luther is something utterly unknown to the pagan and proudly passionate Faust, and also to his creator, Goethe. And, much as Germany admires the one as her intellectual Prime Minister, to-day Germany remains loyal to her spiritual Peasant Emperor.

But once again, to get the clear and full measure of Luther, you must turn to the rare souls, the thinkers and heroes, who date as well as create the three most marked eras in the history of Christianity. I suppose no fourth name could be added to the three mighties of our Lord Christ—Paul, Augustine, and Luther. Each cast in a distinct mould, they have two points

in common, fitting them for being alike originating and revolutionary souls; namely, they came to their final shape of thought and life through terrible storms, and so shaped themselves, so overflowing with a new energy, they were fitted to be the leaders through black darkness and imminent crises, of many generations of souls.

Let us now, having determined thus far the place of Luther among the grandest epochs and actors in Christian, in universal history, look for a little more closely at the man himself in those mental and moral qualities which stamped themselves on his work, and reproduced themselves in multitudes of other men.

We had almost asked you to look at the outer build and bearing of the man. It interprets in much the inner Luther. There is scarcely another face in history that we would more readily recognise were we to meet it in the street, than that of Luther. There is not an atom in that face of the lean-cheeked, furtive-eyed, thin, suspecting nose, of Erasmus, next to Luther, the greatest intellectual power in these years; nor of the worn, austere look and two-storied brow of Calvin. Luther meets you with the round, firm-set bulk of some Saxon peasant, with a half-defiant and uplifted turn of the neck, revealing enormous animal force; and with the keen look of those piercing, half-black, half-brown eyes, now like a lake rippling with careless joy, now like a tarn dark with concentrated pathos. That figure, that face of Luther has a curious likeness, in some points, to that of another peasant, John Bunyan; but suggests even more vividly that of another peasant, whose native genius strangely and strongly resembles his own—that of Robert Burns.

But now looking deeper, what were the three features of character that made and make him the unique, the inexhaustible object of interest and impression that he is !

First and farthest down and off is what we would call his human quality. He is emphatically a man ; and his being also great in quantity as well as quality made him a man of the people—a man belonging to every other man. This quality traverses alike the lines of Protestantism and Popery, and makes him the brother, the master, the favourite of men the most opposite, as Döllinger and Heine, Neander and Carlyle. The broad, breezy humanity of Luther is akin, in some of its moods, to the melancholy pathos of a German forest, in others, to the rich joy of a German meadow. He is rough, yet tender ; firm, yet flexible. You have the refreshing sense of being in the open-air with a companion ; not among the folios of a library with a scholar, nor in the heated discussions of a theologian. The scholar and theologian are absorbed in the man.

And this rose from his beginning at nearly the lowest stratum of social life ; doing a great deal of starvation ; begging for bread ; using the voice that charmed and conquered Europe, first as a poor singing child in the streets of German towns. This he never forgot. It gave him his insight, his forthright strokes of rude energy, his melting movements of heart, his idiom of spirit, speech, and bearing. This remained with him in his temper of a lion, sometimes degenerating into that of a bear, in his stormy gusts of passion, in his ungovernable, unmeasurable indignation and invective, whether addressed to a haughty King Henry VIII., or to a noble Zwingli.

But besides this turbulent, unsmoothed nature, there were the two things that draw all hearts, pathos and humour. Tragedy and comedy were on the right and left of his untamed, heavy-laden, or lightly-bounding spirit; and the spirit itself, the man, lay between, in its deep, Divine largeness and might. His outflowing, abounding love of his fellows made him the frank boon companion, the tender husband, the playful or sorrowing father, the man who could now, in the kingship of his genius, be a David in the music and hymns of the Reformation, and again, in the consecration of his apostleship, be a Paul in his unflinching grasp of its principles and movements. And the man who has much in him of two such contrasted natures as those of David and Paul, has a large quantity of varied being, and cannot but draw all men after him. Orator, poet, seer of the Reformation, he rose far above the lower regions of rhetoric, versification, and logic. This threefold power sprung straight and unhewn out of the man God had made and trained him to be. Therefore his words were not only "half-battles," but whole victories; and his songs have in them the ring of Burns' "A man's a man for a' that," and of "Scots wha hae." Hence the spontaneity, the abundance, the abandon, the unexpectedness, the simplicity with depth, the speech rough as the bark of a fir-tree; sweet as wild-flowers with the clay still on their roots; the elastic ease of his style; the sense of having got only a few cupfuls out of an unfathomable and inexhaustible well.

But going deeper and farther up, this man of the people was a man of genius. His severe scholastic studies, his ardent discipline in music and poetry—

these were the culture in two directions of a genius that compassed, and was "true to the kindred points of heaven and home."

He had neither the refined learning of Melancthon nor the inexorable logic of Calvin, but he had a learning that tingled with life and a logic that shot past the steps of thought to smite at once the conclusion. He had therefore the highest genius of a few fruitful ideas, or, better still, ideals. Like Darwin's famous five creative germs, so many were the germs of Luther, and in either case all the world is their evolution.

He knew Aquinas well, Bernard better, Augustine best of all. He loved Tauler the mystic; and above all the "Theologia Germanica." But these did not modify, they only accentuated his original gifts. He had the spiritual genius, that of inwardness. He was one of that highest class of men called of old, *homines desideriorum*—men known at once in all times as those who follow hard after God, whose hearts break for longing they have unto His commandments. But having felt all the old thoughts, that very feeling made him speak them in his own fresh words. And his peculiarity and power lay in this single point, that the richest experiences of Divine truth and feeling came from him and lived among men clad in homely garb and full of artless gesture.

At last we have reached the highest point of his growth and power. Luther was, above all, and through all, a man of God—a soul saved and imbreathed by Jesus Christ.

That burly, plebeian peasant, that passionate, intuitive genius, was transfigured by a Divine faith into a man of Divine love and energy. These first two

made him popular and powerful on the human side. This last and chiefest lifted him up, on the Divine side, into a humanity full of God—into genius through which Christ the Saviour walked among men in risen and triumphant power. You know well the spiritual drama of his conversion struggles—struggles which gave a tragic colour to a nature that might otherwise have been too boisterous—a noble elevation to a life that might otherwise have been too coarse and turbulent. Luther's reformation of himself was harder to achieve than his reformation of Europe. Hence the sad conflict—the *anfechtungen* all through his life; hence the grand victory-gleams that shed a touching heroic halo round his memory.

Two days of conversion—two only—those of Paul and Augustine, are celebrated every year in the festivals of the Catholic Church. It would be well to add, as the third conversion, that of Luther. Paul blind in Damascus, Augustine weeping in Milan, may well have hung up beside them Luther in agony at Erfurt. Out of the broken clefts of these men's hearts have flowed the blessed waters of a Divine Gospel through all generations. Each discovered for their own time the grace of God, the love of Christ, and the justification before God, with which is twin-born sanctification before men. The unspeakable generosity of God in Christ to all sinners, His celestial breath of life in all saints, had long passed, in their full Divine beauty and sublimity, out of sight. These were in the Church; but the Church stood between them and the soul. The noblest of Greek statues, the Venus Victrix of Milo, was dug up after lying hidden centuries under the earth. It was pieced together afresh, and, though

not quite entire, it now stands before the gazer in its consummate beauty, in its almost Christian touch of feeling. And so the Gospel—the perfect image of God—had long lain hidden; but Luther discovered it, pieced it together, and, though some parts were still needed to complete its perfection, and some stains through earthly contact still dimmed its beauty, yet now again it stands before the eyes of penitence and faith, the supreme likeness of the Incarnate Saviour, the supreme attraction of the distant and yearning soul. The discovery of Columbus, that had in these years added a continent to the earth; the discovery of Copernicus, that added an immeasurable heaven round which the earth moved; these were little compared to the discovery of Luther, in which he rose and lifted others with him, from the German to the universal mind; from the human heart unto the heart of God.

In the wake of this great discovery followed many others. It brightened every page of the Bible, and made it so precious that Luther must give it to the German folk in their own German tongue. It swept aside all other things between God and man, and gave to each soul a priestly freedom to go into the holiest of all; a kingly freedom from all other dominion of Pope or Prince; a prophetic liberty of speech and thought that none might limit or suppress. Specially, it made Luther a great preacher; great, not in polish, but in passion, in electric force, in overwhelming insistence, in tender persuasiveness.

But I must not linger. Here once more in Luther, looked at all round, you have repeated the record of the creation of man. “And God formed man of the

dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life—so man became a living soul.” So God made Luther. The dust of the ground—the native rough clay, not transfigured into marble or porcelain, is all there in Luther, but in it is the breath of life ; and this, the native, but noblest gift of a swift, strong, pentecostal, rushing wind and breath of God. So Luther became a living soul ; living itself and giving life to others. “ He indeed is a fruit-tree yielding fruit after its kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth. And it was so. God saw it was good,” and many generations have called it blessed.

There then Luther ever stands, as he stood of old at Worms ; having done all, he stood—in his indomitable courage and firmness ; and he could do no otherwise—and therefore he did what he did with all his might. But deeper down, and mightier far, was the humility, the self-surrender that cried, “ God help me.” And helped he was of his God. And so he and we are sure that nothing is denied to such courage and such dependence. Amen, let it be, and it shall ever be. All through these are his watchwords, his war-cries. Raise therefore his monument, and write on it his great fields of battle and victory ; on one side ERFURT, where he won justification by faith ; and on another WORMS, where he championed truth against a whole world ; on a third WARTBURG, where he opened up to the world the love of Christ in His own Word ; and again, his Augustinian home at WITTENBERG, where he opened up all hearts to the dear, purifying love of wife and children ; and finally, EISLEBEN, where he entered first, into his sad, brave, glorious earthly life, and last, into his glad, victorious, more glorious heavenly life.

Now let me gather up all and impress on our dear students the threefold lesson which, like a threefold cord, binding them, in future years, alike to Christ and to souls, is not easily broken. Study to be men—men among men, with large, open doors, from which affection will go forth, by which need will come in. Add to that all the treasure of genius or gift, whatever it be, which God has given you to be laid out to usury ; first in your preparation, and last in your work. But crown all by being men of God, who know the love of God and of Christ through struggle of weary fighting, through rest of blessed faith, through consecration of the whole man and the whole life.

Then each of you will in your own day do a work which He who measures work not by its bulk, but by its spirit, will crown ; for to a Luther, however mighty, no higher word can be spoken than, “Well done, good and faithful servant ; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord ;” and to each of you, however weak, no lower word will come, from the same unspeakable love, and all-forgiving pity of the Master and Joy of all His servants.

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It is no genuine, much less generous, defence of the Reformation to deny to the Church of Rome its own place, and that one of immense importance, in the formation of Christendom. The Church that fostered the genius, industry, and piety of men like Anselm, Aquinas, and Bernard ; that diffused new lessons, and a new spirit of mercy and equality among men ; that

even in a Hildebrand confronted and mastered the rude and reckless tyranny of the civil power; that reared the glorious cathedrals of the Middle Ages, and provided in many an institution a retreat for penitence, sorrow, and wisdom amidst the storms of war and the evils of society—the Church that either originated or fostered these merciful and beneficent influences cannot be deprived of its rightful place in the providential order of the world.

Still, at the close of its thousand years it had immensely altered, and in many points greatly for the worse. A Leo X. sat in the chair of the truly apostolic Leo I.; a Julius II. succeeded to a Gregory I., justly called the Great. Enormous wealth—much of it wrongly got; irresponsible power, extending from this world to the next; corruptions in life, and what is always twin-born, corruptions in doctrine, had done their work, and it was a work that all thoughtful as well as religious men felt to be one that demanded reformation. In the course of the two centuries before the Reformation, General Councils met to remove, and with no sparing hand, the acknowledged and great abuses. Devout, heavenly spirits—a Tauler, a Thomas à Kempis—cultivated their solitary yearnings in a hidden mystical fellowship with Christ, little dependent on the rites of the Church. Precursors of the Reformation—Wiclif, Huss, Savonarola—the last preached in 1498 Reformation truth in the years of Luther's boyhood—these men in England, Bohemia, Italy, wrestled and died for a mighty change. The Atlantic wave travels far and long before it dashes in full force on the shore, and makes its slow-gathering force felt and heard decisively. The air was becoming

electric; light was streaking the dark clouds; seeds of new truth and influence were scattered everywhere by men who knew not whereunto they would grow. "The time of figs was not yet." The many intellectual, social, political, religious movements, all pointing in the direction of change, need not be gone over. But none of them was *the* movement. None of them had power to breathe a new life and create a new Church and a new Europe.

Such crises come at long intervals in history. Men wait in suspense. Two things are always needed in such critical periods—a new principle embodying itself in a new man.

These were needed in the great exodus of the Church out of Egypt. God laid open and brightened His old revelation; and He created and trained the new leader, Moses. The man fully equipped to be head, and heart, and tongue of a crisis so great must be himself correspondingly great in every way, in mind, character, and sympathy, with his work. The entrance of Christianity into the world was the greatest of all such movements. The Lord Jesus Christ was both the principle and the power, but there was need of a human, a revolutionary spirit with complete self-surrender to the Master, and sympathy with his fellows; and Paul carried the fire that was kindled in him on the Damascus road, on to his last day in the Roman prison.

And now a new principle was needed. It was the simple, original, essential principle of the Gospel, that man, the sinner, is free through faith in Christ to go into the holiest of all; and through the same faith that frees him before God, is free in God's Church

and in God's world. This principle is in the old Pauline phrase called justification by faith; but call it what you will, it is the primal condition of a new Divine peace and power.

And this principle was embodied in Luther. This most memorable man was the last word of the old, as certainly he was the first word of the new, movement.

One is curious, to say the least, to learn what it was in this man which made him, and no other, the supreme power in fairly opening up a new spiritual path to the Church and the world. We shall see this in some measure if we mark the other men of the same day, whose names and reputation seemed at one time to point them out as the leaders of Israel. There was Ulrich von Hütten, with his keen hatred of the Roman power, and his gift of vehement invective and satire. Far more, there was Erasmus, with his thorough perception of the abuses of the Romish system, expressed in the most fascinating and sharp-cutting style, so as to rouse the dullest and enrage the most bigoted, with his insatiable industry as editor of the Classics and of the "Church Fathers;" and, above all, his invaluable skill and care in editing his Greek New Testament of 1516, only one year before Luther's "Theses." But it was neither to Hütten nor Erasmus that the Reformation work was committed. Hütten had not the high spiritual nature—the *aliquid* Divine, either in genius or in grace, that were imperatively needed. Erasmus also, with all his marvellous wit, his keen Voltaire-like irony, his unquenchable enthusiasm for learning, even for Christian learning, did indeed his own work—a needed, and a noble work; but it was not the work God and man required. A

learning deeper than even his in its almost universal range—a learning gained by passionate life-and-death struggles, which it was not in his fine but thin and timid nature to attain—that was gained by Luther, through long, terrible upheavals in the very depths of his whole nature. From the aboriginal fires and fusion of Luther's whole being were thrown up before the Church and the world the fresh, lofty ranges of truth and life that had long been submerged. The Reformation passed first through the furnaces of Luther's experience: there it was molten and moulded; therefore, when it came forth, it melted and moulded souls into its own image.

All the books, principles, forces that have made new eras in human history, have first made a new era in the history of the heart from which they are poured out. So it was with Moses, with Paul, with Augustine, with Dante—with an Italian intensity and white heat of passionate genius, equal to those of the German Luther: so it was with many more. One only I shall mention. Thomas Chalmers had in him much of the look, speech, bearing of Luther; and he did a Luther work in his own day, because he had gained the truth that made him a new man, in the same way in which Luther had gained it before him.

It was this that made all the difference in Luther from the Humanists, whether Pagan or Christian, a Rabelais or an Erasmus. And this gave to Luther, far less gifted than Erasmus in many things, the quality that alone can create and sway the religions and nations. Luther was not only original—he was aboriginal. There is about him the freshness, the flavour, the wildness of the old Teutonic—the old Thuringian forests,

with their profound eeriness and melancholy. He is a man lofty and mighty as its most towering pines, that moan sadly when the blast of passion or struggle bends them and draws out their strong arms ; or again laugh all over with irrepressible gleams of joy when they are struck by the full sunshine. Luther was a piece of hard granite, that needed hewing and polishing, but never could take on the delicate lines and the fine gleams of Erasmus, who was a bit of fine-grained and carefully chiselled marble. He had rough work to do, and he needed broad shoulders and passionate will with which to do it. He had to cut through deep-tangled roots ; and he was a wedge, not too fine to defeat its purpose. Take him as a creation of genius and grace, and he was full of the first impressions of God in both departments ; and, best of all, he did not know his own greatness. Gunpowder does not know its exploding power ; it thinks it is like the common dust around. Nor did Luther. What conscience compelled, he did ; and his deed, therefore, carried with it all the power and purpose of God. Like all men who have gone through searching inward crises, and who reproduce them in the souls of others, Luther could not escape wounds,—and these the deepest,—even on the fields of his noblest victories ; and hence came long fits of profound depression. His calm steadfastness of faith had to stand the onrush of fierce temptations from Erfurt all through to Eisleben. The devil he encountered was no shadow, but a solid palpable fiend. With what a width of experience Luther could sympathise—gambols with little children—conflicts with the prince of darkness ; all through his life the sunny light of his central life has round it, dim and

dark, the shadows cast both from this world and the next. This man was not an island, he was a continent. What Edward Irving, himself a Luther-like soul, said of David, King of Israel, is true of Luther, "The heart of a hundred men strove and struggled together within the narrow continent of his single heart." It is this mixture of child and hero—of man of God and man of the soil, fused and welded together into one Luther, through great surges of passionate storm and as great upliftings of passionate triumph, that makes him stand out alone among the men of his time; that gives him his own place among men of all time, and put into his hands, and those of none other, the key and the sceptre of the Reformation.

Among the other Reformers he stands a king, with a sort of native uncrowned pre-eminence. Melancthon looks beside him, with his curved sweep of brow and thoughtful eye, as if he had taken years to grow into this perfection of refined and cultured aspect; while Luther looks, in his broad massiveness, his untamed power, as if he had sprung an hour ago fresh and unhewn from the dust of the earth. Zwingle and Knox have both the same brave, defiant look, but it is not painted, as in Luther, on the background of a certain simplicity and pathos as well as strength, which made the child and the peasant, the sinner and the saint, feel that in Luther—so high otherwise above them—there was a brother close to their hearts. Calvin, who completed with a genius all his own the work which Luther had commenced, looks like a saint of the Roman Calendar—so thin, ascetic, solitary is he; while Luther stands before us like a tribune of the people, plus the genius and the apostle.

Passing into another department, that we may see and measure Luther from a totally different point of view: the two men of highest original genius in the history of Germany are Luther and Goethe—and these are almost exact opposites. I do not think Luther would have regarded with special sympathy the Hellenism—the Greek perfection—the artistic and æsthetic ideals which begat the unwearied self-culture of Goethe, and which he placed at the summit of all human endeavours. And Goethe, we know, amidst all his compelled admiration, complained of Luther as having by his Reformation hindered for centuries the progress of humanity, which the Renaissance had initiated and promoted. Nevertheless they are two grand, however distinct, figures. Goethe understood, at least as an artist, the process by which Luther became what he was, as his “Confessions of a Fair Soul,” in “Wilhelm Meister” show; and the one book that gives the most inner revelation of Goethe’s real character, and that at its own critical turning-point, his “Faust,” paints depths of human passion—weariness, sin, dissatisfaction—in fact, a change, a conversion of a soul, but one without grace or holiness—altogether in the lines of Mephistopheles, and therefore of proud knowledge and passionate sensuality; the upper and celestial counterpart of which is contained in the story of Luther’s own tragic spiritual struggles and at last divinely completed victory. So far their paths lay together, till at the point of a Divine conversion they parted. In their views of religion and humanity, in the mould and rhythm of their essential thinking and style, in their look and gesture and accent, in their whole influence, Goethe is a supreme instance of the

Renaissance, Luther of the Reformation. He who knows both will never in the least confound either the men or their movements.

It is impossible for us to enter at all on the life, growth, and work of Luther. It is interesting to mark that the two most eminent types of the Renaissance and the Reformation were both—the one in Italy, the other in Germany—born in the same year, 1483; Raffaello in April, Luther in November. Much meaning we have not space to develop lies in the mere placing together of these two illustrious names. In 1520 Raffaello lay dead in Rome, his last painting, “The Transfiguration,” placed at the head of his bier. In the same year Luther was burning the Pope’s Bull in Wittenberg, and painting his Transfiguration of the Divine Christ to be seen of all. In 1546 Luther was the first of the Primates of the Reformation to die, Zwingli excepted, who, however, died in battle in 1531, not worn out, like Luther, in a continual lifelong conflict. Luther’s great historical appearances ended in his forty-second year: in his writing of the ninety-fifth Theses in 1517; in his burning the Pope’s Bull in 1520; his appearance at the Diet of Worms in 1521; his translation of the New Testament in the Wartburg in 1521; its publication in 1522; with his defeat of Carlstadt and Anabaptism in 1522. Others took up either his work or work of like sort, but he had fought his Trafalgars and Waterloos before he was forty-two, and though his figure rises higher than that of any other in the succeeding years, yet the historical Luther was completed.

But he was ever influential—ever industrious. Year after year brought fresh victories, but fresh cares and

sorrows and effort. None of the great Reformers were long-lived. Knox lived longest of all, to his sixty-seventh year. Calvin died in his fifty-fifth; while Luther and Melancthon departed from their scene of wearing work and anxiety in their sixty-third.

The Council of Trent met in 1545. Luther died in Eisleben, where he was born, in 1546. The death of Luther closed the first great chapter of the Reformation. The Council of Trent opened a new chapter for the Roman Church, in which the work and doctrines of Luther left deep and indelible traces. But the work Luther began still lives, and shall live. The saying of John Wesley, who owed his conversion to Luther, is pathetically and nobly true: "God buries His workmen, but carries on His work." And the words of Paul, to whom Luther owed his conversion, are, amidst the disappearance even of the greatest men, full of an interesting strength and hope: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

## IV.

*CALVIN AND CALVINISM.*

HOWEVER men may differ about the merits of the great Reformation, it has its place in the history of Europe as the real turning-point between the old and the new ; and among those who look upon it as a religious movement, it is truly regarded as second in the history of Christianity only to its introduction, in the resurrection of old truths, and the outpouring of new influences among men.

And as in the first Reformers of the world—the Apostles—we have four distinct types of mind, so here, in these true successors of the Apostles, Luther is the Peter, the primate of the group—fresh, passionate, homely, and outspoken ; Zwingli comes close to James in practical emphasis and direct manliness of character ; Melancthon is a true younger brother of John, not so lofty, nor, in his moderation so decisive in his accent, but full of the same contemplative love and deep fountain thoughts ; and certainly Calvin may well take the place of Paul—for, while differing by nature and grace, as every marked man does from another, in the amazing flexibility of mental movement and winning tenderness of personal affection, springing up amidst the strictest and widest logical processes, yet kindred

in a certain continuity of absorbing purpose, a love of clear-cut definition in statement of truth, and unswerving consistency in its development, and, above all, the central predominance of the same high land-marks of grace and predestination, the two men look out towards each other from the distance of sixteen centuries, and are felt to be essentially the same.

I have been asked to speak to you on this important occasion on Calvin and Calvinism. I have not been limited to any particular phase of a subject so suggestive on many sides. I shall therefore try to gather up as various and vital impressions about him, his work, and its relation to present circumstances, as I can. I shall take for granted your possession of details which there is no space to include, and I am encouraged, as I advance, by the assurance that there is no theme that comes so close to the principles and history of this assembly.

What is of greatest value in any man is the work which he himself is, through the providence of God and the course of his life. And to any thoughtful Christian nothing so unfolds or verifies the meaning and power of Christianity as a great life that has been inspired and governed by it. The beginnings of Calvin were small. Of parents one stage above the mechanic class, in Noyon, a small town in Picardy—of an able, aspiring father, and an earnest, anxious mother—he was born in the year 1509. Luther was already twenty-six years, Melancthon twelve, Zwingli twenty-five, and Knox four years old at this time. Herein, too, he is like Paul, the last of the Apostles—the one who was to sum up their labours, to bind up their varied sheaves, and to garner them in strong storehouses for

the use of many generations. His death took place in 1564, so that he lived only to his fifty-fifth year. None of the Reformers lived to the threescore and ten. Luther and Melancthon died at the same age, sixty-three; Zwingli was struck down in battle when forty-seven; Calvin wore out his life wearily and bravely in long years of a lonely sentinel's watching, and a lonely commander's burden of a wide and hard battle. Our John Knox lived eight years longer, and the last words read to him were from his friend Calvin's "Commentary on the Ephesians."

Calvin was, "from certain vital signs," as Milton says of himself in another relation, destined for the Church. He began his training at an early hour, and the stuff out of which God moulded the Reformer we discern already in the boy of ten, whom from his strictness of conduct and bold reproofs, his school-fellows, as is the manner of boys, nicknamed the Accusative. Calvin was a man not accustomed to speak of himself. Luther is always Luther. Calvin is, for the most part, Calvinism; but in his preface to his "Commentary to the Psalms," he gives, in rapid outline, his own rendering of the way in which God had led him. Strange to say, it is in David that Calvin saw most of himself and his history. David and Calvin—how opposite! Yet it is always the contraries that clasp in the closest affinity. And so he writes:—"But as David was taken from the sheep-fold and elevated to the rank of supreme authority, so God, having originally taken me from my obscure and humble condition, has reckoned me worthy of being invested with the honourable office of a preacher and minister of the Gospel."

Calvin could not help feeling he was a king, though the king was hidden under a Geneva cloak; and none ever felt more than he did that he was so emphatically by the grace of God. He was thoroughly trained at Orleans, Paris, and Bourges. His first stage was as a scholar; the old Latin classics became his masters, models, and companions. Moreover, with the new-born zeal of the times, he added to these monuments of genius—among which Cicero remained his favourite to the end, and gave him the style that has floated down his masses of thought to our days—the knowledge of the Greek classics. More than the discovery of the Nineveh marbles in our time, as much as the reading of the old foot-prints on the geological strata, was this exhuming of the old Greek thought and life. It created the Renaissance with its humanists—men who turned from the Church, and in many instances from Christianity, and gave themselves up to letters and pagan philosophy. Rabelais and Montaigne in France, Mirandola and Bembo in Italy, were the fathers of our modern literature.

But, in another direction, what loosened from the Church turned many to the Bible, and especially the Greek Testament, by his edition of which, in 1516, Erasmus, a sort of well-clad John the Baptist, with irony, instead of denunciation—a man as much humanist as Christian—prepared the way for the Reformation. At the time when Calvin was at college—the period of life when the young and empty mind is open for all impressions, and especially the latest and most living—the air was full of the stir of new ideas, charged with the sap and promise of a glorious spring-time. Cicero, on the one hand, and Paul on the other;

Plato, with his glorious old Greek ideals, and John, with his celestial ever-young revelations—these stood over against the Church, and claimed the supremacy of the fresh and enthusiastic spirits. Calvin was graciously, and after a sharp but comparatively short struggle, led to choose Paul and John, and through them Christ. With that instancy and thoroughness, which are Calvin all through, he renounced the Church of Rome, and surrendered absolutely to the almighty grace of God.

Like himself, Luther lets us into the whole secret of his long struggle ere the battle was won. Justification through faith in Christ was his living experience and doctrine. So in the story of his conversion the phases are most vivid and touching. But Calvin, here consistent with himself, only gives hints, brief but burning, of a history in which God was the great agent; and so he summed up his experience, and shaped his doctrine on the master-theme of grace. This inward change was taking place from his eighteenth to his twenty-second year; and in 1531, when he was twenty-four, Calvin renounced definitely all his old allegiance to the Roman Church, and to more than the Roman Church—to all influence of any decisive sort of his humanist studies. Luther was pushing out of the Church, and was in his thirty-fourth year when, as was congenial with his poetic and sympathetic nature, he broke off, though with much of the old adhering to him. Zwingli and Melancthon came clean out of Rome, but leant in much to the Greek masters. In Calvin there was, rightly or wrongly, a thoroughness which marks the man and made him the Reformer he became. I cannot help thinking of him as the young Napoleon, coming

late in the day of revolution, and, with new methods, changing the whole situation ; or rather, afterwards, he reminds us of Wellington in the coolness and patience of his courage, as well as his minuteness of organisation, waiting in his corner, in Geneva, and ruling great portions of Europe from his camp on the entrenched heights of truth. But, besides this thoroughness of conviction, Calvin had gained in his training as a lawyer the method, the strategy of his future battle. He had turned aside a year or two from the Church and its studies to the law, and there, as in all things, he speedily became foremost among the first. This faculty of taking a definite and far-reaching grasp of a subject served him well in every department of his religious work, and made him the first pleader, as well as final judge, of the great cause of the day—Reformation against Romanism. This is always a most valuable training. I find Paul, Tertullian, and Augustine went through it, and how much it contributed to their clear and compacted views you can easily see. John Knox at Haddington was also a notary public, and learned his skill in drawing up the Articles of the Reformation of Scotland by drawing up deeds about a few acres in the neighbourhood of his native burgh.

I can now only mark the events which proceeded from this man, the lawyer, the Christian. I shall pass over the details of progress and change and seize the main points of crisis and achievement.

The first great event was the publication in 1536, in Basle, when a young man of twenty-seven, of his Code of Doctrine and Discipline, the Institutes of the Christian Religion. It was the book mainly that

made Scaliger, the sovereign dictator of letters, say—"Calvin is alone among theologians; there is no ancient to compare with him;" and drew from Sir William Hamilton, well able to judge, and little inclined to praise the Reformers, the unqualified eulogium—"Looking merely to his learning and ability, Calvin was superior to all modern, perhaps all ancient divines. Succeeding ages have certainly not exhibited his equal. To find his par we must ascend at least to Aquinas or Augustine." No book of theological doctrine equal to it has been produced during the last three centuries, except some claim is made for placing beside or near it the great work of Schleiermacher; and though, looking, the eye is now and then caught by the massive works of Aquinas and the small but profound and suggestive pieces of Anselm, yet it is only when the City of God (*De Civitate Dei*) of Augustine comes to the horizon that an equal, if not a superior, makes itself felt to be there. It was a little book at first, of five hundred pages and six chapters, but it grew during twenty-three years to five times the size, till, in the last edition in 1559, five years before he died, you have Calvin in the full height, and depth, and length, and breadth of his teaching. It is curious to watch how the best ideas, the carefully-devised phrases, the proportion and place of connecting thoughts that appear time after time in his Commentaries and occasional pieces are laid up in store, fitted into, and grow to the increase of the whole work.

To read it through is an intellectual drill, a moral test, a sacred service; for he never relaxes his demand on attention, never descends from a lofty standard, and

never ceases to stir, either to shrinking or yielding, the religious nature. I do not think there is a single kindling of imagination, even when the granite of his passionate logic is heated sevenfold. There are passages on prayer, and on the glory and misery of man, in which, rising parallel to his great themes, he takes rank in sublimity as impressive and more severe than Bossuet, and becomes, if less penetrating and passionate, as mighty as Pascal. Still, he is of intellect, not imagination, all compact.

Locke, in his essay, has one or two famous images; Calvin, in his work, not one. In this resembling some bare granite peak, as Sinai; but in another respect, which grows upon the reader, resembling it more. At first as you approach, it looks large indeed, but not overwhelming; only the longer you travel, day by day nearer to it, it grows the more, and when you pass away from it, it seems still to haunt the eye and command the attention. It is the unity, the comprehensiveness that refuses to break into parts, which claims the whole mind; and so unadorned, self-sustained, massive, it overpowers the conviction, and calls forth a kindred feeling towards a work that we gradually discover could only have been piled up by a soul that burns steadily through the whole mass with a purpose and patience that assert themselves in abiding force and not in transient flash and flame. It is, in fact, the sheer unshrinking unity, like some monolith, the intellectual passion, this sacrifice of all fear of consequences, this Sinai-like lonely majesty—for it becomes majestic in the end—that forms the essential character of Calvin, intellectually and morally, whether for attraction or repulsion. Why

have Sinai wooded to the top, with its sides blossoming into flowers, parcelled out in parterres? and why have Calvin other than he is, in his bare and simple grandeur?

By this book he did an immense service to the Reformation. In its preface, the letter addressed to Francis I., he speaks as a king to a king, and as with sound of trumpet enters upon the defence of the new Christian cause. Like a master builder, the City of God rises under his hands like Jerusalem, which was a city compactly built together. He completed the temple, with its three courts—doctrine, government, and discipline; the relation of the soul to Christ, in grace; to each other Christian soul, in the Church; to the world outside, in the State. The unity of Rome, the charm of which can with difficulty be thrown off, was met by a unity of Reformation by which to this day it is balanced. The magnificent constructive power found a place for everything, harmonising the Augustinian doctrine of grace and the Lutheran principle of justification; the Swiss leaning to the central position of the Word of God, and the German leaning to that of the loving Christ in the individual soul, and moving with unhalting step straight on from the first thought of God in the creation and redemption of man, to the visible embodiment of that thought in a spiritually independent Church on earth, and an everlasting fellowship of the blessed in heaven.

And while the book is great in its internal completeness, it is great also in reference to Calvin's mind. Though it grew five-fold, it was only as the man grows out of the child. He changed nothing in the leading principles, hardly anything in the secondary

details. Luther had no systematising genius; his thoughts were not like a rock, but like a river—a noble stream, indeed, changing its course, but ever bent for the ocean. Melancthon had an organising power, and his Common Places (*Loci Communes*) were published when he was only twenty-four. But though he formulated Luther's principles, still he did not build the walls all round, and, moreover, shifted in after years the very basis of his system, and vacillated between divine grace and human will; but Calvin lived out the old canon of the Church Father: "Everywhere, always, and in all things the same;" and so his work, while it grew in size and changed in arrangement, never lost the power that attends unwavering and severe consistency.

But I must pass from this work, the programme of his whole life, to another department of his labours, in which he shines with almost as great—I shall not say splendour, for that is not the word to apply to Calvin, but—luminousness. Calvin's commentaries are masterpieces in that kind, and he ranks among its chiefs in all the needed qualities of sufficient learning, surpassing mental size in height and breadth, and, best of all, spiritual susceptibility. Men who differ most widely from him in the ultimate results of his judgments, agree in extolling his marvellous sagacity and tact, and, above all, his transparent fairness and want or suppression of bias. Nobody can doubt his learning, insight, and devoutness; but to have that quality in surpassing measure, betrays alike the moral singleness and the intellectual manifoldness of Calvin. He had such an implicit trust in God's Word that he committed himself to it whithersoever it listed to go; and

so he dismisses, with a decisiveness a Rationalist might envy and could not surpass, so-called Messianic prophecies, texts in support of the Trinity and the Divinity of Christ, even for predestination and particular redemption. Calvin had so firm a faith in the general system of truth in the Bible that he was under little or no temptation to mix the hay, wood, and stubble of doubtful interpretation and disputed texts with the gold, silver, and precious stones that lay around in the rich and ample quarry.

Such, with many occasional pieces, were the works of the mind and pen of Calvin; and his were *works* indeed, coming from the very heart as well as head and meant to do something to further the great aim of his life. There was another department in which he excelled. His daily work was that of an ecclesiastical and civil statesman. The little town of Geneva, in a corner of sloping land between the Alps and Jura, with its border position between north and south Europe, was free at that moment of its old civil and ecclesiastical rulers, and so was a clear space in which to build up a new community, on both sides, spiritual and civil, in Church and State; and that town, though little in size, and containing only some twelve or fourteen thousand inhabitants—in fact, only three thousand grown men—was the very place Providence had chosen to be the cradle of a new and mighty influence. How Calvin was led to that city has all the interest of a Christian romance; how he lived, laboured, and died there has elements of keen pathos and tragedy—elements, too, of most instructive history. We cannot in the least enter upon it here. His first appearance there is noted in the archives as “that Frenchman”

—“*iste Gallus* ;” now, Geneva is known principally because of the name of Calvin. It is a history that recalls in many points that of another—Moses, the first leader of the Church. It was in both the building up, in a place set apart by geographical position, of a new Church and State ; not merely the teaching of a new doctrine, but the instant and energetic application of it to all life in the community. The Jews and the Genevese were very much the same material ; both had left their past, but had gained nothing fixed for the present ; both were partly superstitious and partly libertine. Hence the series of changes, exiles, taunts, conflicts, submissions ; the loneliness of both leaders, the desertion by ancient comrades, and yet ever the homage of some loyal souls. Both died, having got only a glimpse of an unattained perfection, and leaving a name graven on every heart, but marking no spot where the weary brain and hand that moved and ruled all repose. The initials of J. C. and J. K., which I have read on the supposed graves of Calvin and Knox—in the public churchyard of Geneva, and the Parliament Square of Edinburgh—are all the monuments of these two men, whose memorial belongs to the whole Church.

We have already indicated the great lines of his intellectual character, the absolute clearness of his intellect within its own range, the grasp of principles, and the manipulation of details, the assertion of every deduction from his premises, and the close linking, as of coat of mail, of the whole system. And to these it is to be added, that he forgot nothing, had his mind always at the same height and pressure, that by the working of some sort of mental spectrum the ray of

intellect was always and powerfully there, whatever other element is wanting. Comparing him with the men who stand beside him in likeness of religious creed and conformation, Calvin is unique. Take Paul, and you never in Calvin find such chapters as his psalm of love and his argument and prophecy of the resurrection, nor such a dignified propriety and playful persuasiveness as you find in his Epistle to Philemon.

Augustine, his great master—the only one of the fathers to whom, shall I say? he takes off his hat when he meets him—had a range of living and creative speculation, a fiery African glow and abandon of soul, that never either rouses or ripples the sculpturesque fixedness of Calvin; and in Jonathan Edwards, with all his logic, there is a mingling of metaphysical reasoning and mystical yearning. Calvin, in fact, was more the pure reasoner and deducer. Neither speculative nor mystical, he syllogised—got his matter out of the Scripture and shaped it accordingly. What he thus lost in warm attractiveness and burning force, he gains, however, in severe imperatorial measure and authority.

Socially, Calvin does not bulk, though he could make himself feared and loved after a fashion. I have thought it was a great loss to Calvin that he had not a Philip Melancthon, an equal in his own department, as was the privilege of Luther. But if he had no ardours, he had no mean jealousies or envies. It was a loyal admiration, a true, though stern love he received. He was looked up to by those around him as a feudal chief of an intellectual sort. Yet there are times when the inner fountain of tears bursts out, when wife or friends die, when controversy utterly

wearies him, or the battle proves too hard for his poor body, with its constant torture of nine diseases, and for his overladen soul, with the unlifted burden of many countries and churches. His wife and little dead children are pale and passive figures in his life. Yet, though his home lacks the portrait-like warmth and distinctiveness of Luther's, there was true joy when they were beside him, and a want in the Reformer's heart when he dwelt in his lonely rooms. Certainly, and in full consistency with the books of the man, we never hear, as in Luther's case, of the alternate laughter over the cradle, and agony over the coffin of his little ones; nor, as in Melancthon's, of being found rocking his child and reading a book at the same time; nor as in Zwingli's, of his warm love for his heroic wife; nor of a pipe of Bordeaux, which Knox, in dying, humorously wished to be broached. All this is wanting in Calvin. Looking at the two faces, as we see them in true portraits of Luther and Calvin, explains all. In Kranach's Luther—and he never seems done painting him—you have always the same burly figure, bull-like neck, homely Bunyan-like face, with marked brows, vivid eyes looking out or up, and firm, eloquent mouth, with outstretched hands. In the portrait of Calvin—and all is different, and perhaps there are not more than one or two portraits of Calvin—you have the spare form, the thin fur-clad neck; the pale shrunken cheeks; the compact, high, somewhat narrow brow of two storeys—the first the perceptive, the second the reasoning; the long pointed nose, different from that of Erasmus—his is ever sniffing at things in general, Calvin's is pointing down straight to the very object; the firm, sharp lips; and above all, the eyes,

that Beza tells us remained, after all his midnight studies, brightly and piercing black till the end, and the long forefinger stretched out with an inevitable accuracy.

Turning from these to the moral character, there is an undisturbed harmony. Few men have ever lived such a one life of purpose and deed: he had no love of self in any shape—of gold, or pleasure, or fame. All were absorbed in the bending and blending of his will to God's. His very irritability, which he frequently and bitterly lamented, was mainly for God's sake, and his sternness was never mean. We cannot help looking on him with a pitying tenderness as well as a revering awe. One would have liked more of the human, but then we should not have had the Calvin he is; for this was his great character—in spirit, a man of God; in system, emphatically, as Melancthon called him, the theologian; in work, through and through, devoted to the absolute will of God and the good of the Church.

We have necessarily anticipated, in our hints on the works of Calvin, the nature of their contents; but now let us look more closely at the main points of his teaching which formed their spirit, and through which, in living power, he had and still has an immense influence.

The first thing that meets us is, what has been called the formal principle of the Reformation, namely, the place he assigns to the authority of the divine Word, as compared with that which Luther gave to the material principle, namely, justification by faith in Christ. Calvin, through the instinct of his mind, sought for the starting-point of theology, not in an

inward experience, however divine, but an outward fact, the Word of God. In it lay the substance of all he taught as doctrine, and realised as experience. So planting his foot there, he excluded the whole authority of the Church, and dismissed as vain, apart from the Bible, everything that could not relate itself to it or be proved by it. The Bible to him was, in fact, the consciousness of the Church. Severing thus the rule of faith from Romanism, he severed it also from philosophy; for these two extremes have also their points of junction. Hence Calvinism moves midway between Romanism and Rationalism. Luther inclined strongly to tradition, and Zwingli to pagan philosophy. Calvin stood clear of both, as fountains of truth and foundations of teaching; but the proof of the Bible he held to lie, not so much in its miracles and prophecies, as in its native nobleness and fitness of doctrine, and in the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit. So the Bible became a living experience, a divinely-evidenced truth to the soul, a perpetual and prolonged revelation of God. When he advances to the doctrine of justification by faith, the living Christ in the heart, we have the same comprehensive reconciling tendency—he links together by one stroke the faith that justifies and the faith that regenerates and renews. The inward feeling and the outward fruit are thus one life, and a holy character is laid as deep in the very being of faith as a pacified conscience. It is the one act that receives a whole Christ. Legalism on the one side and Antinomianism on the other, are excluded, simply by the complete statement of the truth.

But the doctrine that gives character and colour to Calvin's system is that of sovereign grace. The

manner of a man's conversion has a determining influence in shaping the method of his creed. It was so with Calvin. Will was his differential quality, and he submitted in the great change to an almighty and all-holy will. This was the cell-form of doctrine out of which the whole organisation afterwards developed; but whatever are the statements of Calvin on this great theme, they are essentially those of Luther, Zwingli, Melancthon in his first period, of Anselm and Augustine, and especially of Paul, their master, and, as a strange and sharp proof of the existence of such a truth as a need for a revived Christianity, of Schleiermacher, though with somewhat pantheistic rendering in the nineteenth century.

Pelagianism deadens, never revives nor strengthens, the Church. Augustinianism, the exaltation of the Divine side of salvation in grace and redemption, asserts itself in reality, however it may be expressed in words. Even the Armenianism of the Wesleyans is closer in spirit to the latter than it is to the former. Moreover, it is a side of doctrine that emerges in every statement of the essential relations of the human and the Divine will. It is hard to find room for both in the forms of human thought, and harder still to verify the working of both without a sacrifice or dilution of either. And when the insoluble difficulty of the relation of the human and the Divine will, of man's responsibility and God's prescience or predestination (for these are practically the same) is intensified by the additional and more painful difficulty of man's sinful will and God's saving act—then a complication ensues that forces from us the old cry of Paul, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge

of God ; how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out ! ” It makes us turn, in the impotence of our understanding, to urge on rather the beseeching of men by the mercies of God. It is, after all, the existence of sin that, as it shatters philosophy, so it perplexes theology, and makes man a contradiction. The real knot of the unloosed difficulty centres not so much in making room for both free-will and omnipotence as in making room for man’s sin and God’s wisdom, holiness, and, above all, love in the same sphere. This difficulty lies not in Calvinism or in any other Christian scheme of doctrine, but in all Theism, and especially in every phase of Christian Theism, where sin is really acknowledged and the absolute need of grace admitted. To this essential difficulty, however, it must be admitted that Calvin has added, or seems to add, some difficulties of his own making. The first touches the extension of predestination. I shall not speak of his exclusion of infants. Few modern Calvinists would follow him in the uninterrupted severity of his deductions on that point. Nor, secondly, shall I dwell on the other extension of the electing act, as including reprobation or a positive direct rejection of the sinful. I do not suppose Calvin believed in this when put in an unmodified form. Still, in his anxiety to make room for the Divine sovereign will, he falls into and sometimes insists on statements with which we cannot agree. Of course even he in the long run is compelled to make room for a responsible human will, and a freedom in that will that follows, indeed, a corrupt nature, but does so as a will freely and from within. It was at this point that Melancthon tried to lift off the pressure, so as to

add a certain equal co-working of the human will that should act, though not by its own unaided causation or in the outcome of human merit. There also I believe he erred. As in the original, so now in the complex position of this insoluble problem we must admit a genuine predestination that vindicates grace; and yet amidst all limits, whether in the creation or the corruption of man, a genuine freedom that verifies responsibility. Where the third truth lies is beyond human skill. Enough, the indestructible fact of Divine grace in its infinite fulness, and of human responsibility in its lowest estate, remain. The speculative reconciliation is in God, the practical is ours.

There is another point—not relating to doctrine, but to tone—that I cannot pass by. No doubt, as all is from God, so all will be to His glory; yet I confess it is a hard trial in reading Calvin to mark—even to have forced upon one—the unmoved, almost triumphant, tone with which he pronounces sentence upon these mysteries not only of Divine knowledge but of human misery. I had much rather have the feelings of John Duncan in this matter, of whom we read: “Speaking to a friend with great tenderness of the ancient philosophers, who knew no Saviour, though they almost cried for one, and pacing up and down the room he said, ‘My heart bleeds for Plato.’”

Passing by his doctrine of the sacraments, the principle that has made Calvinism lovingly and lastingly powerful, as much, if not more, than the doctrine of predestination, is his doctrine of the Church. This, too, has close relations to his doctrine of sovereign grace, for it connected each member of the Church in absolute dependence upon God, and so made all inde-

pendent of a clerical priesthood—all being priests in the Christian sense, and all forming a Church with a government independent of any other government. The equality of believers, their ecclesiastical office-bearers being only their ministers by their choice, for Christ's sake, and to carry out Christ's will and work; the union of Churches with Presbyterian order and authority; and the independence of believers, spiritually and ecclesiastically, of all external authority—these three principles are the greatest practical victories of Calvin, which belong to him as to none of the other Reformers except John Knox, and which gave the Christian Church freedom, both within and without, from priest and from prince.

Such were the main points of his system. We need not dwell on its excellences, its elevating all to a Divine height and origin, its clear assurance of individual salvation through Christ, its rooting deep in the Divine, the independence of each soul from every other, and of the community of Christian souls from all external pressure, and its supreme end of personal holiness, and ecclesiastical discipline and doctrine as the means towards this end. Nor need I detain you upon its defects, at which I have already hinted. But they are mainly two: the first, the putting of a Divine secret decree in the foreground, instead of the Divine declared love in Jesus Christ; putting the unscaleable mountain of mystery and power before the soul, instead of the sweet nourishing pastures of infinite redeeming grace; and the second like unto it on the other side of the system, the asserting of punishment, even to death, to enforce the discipline of the Christian Church. I mention this the more expressly lest it should be

thought that I had forgotten Servetus and his tragic end. But when I mention it, I must add that the blame thrown on Calvin is most unrighteously one-sided. There was no man of that day, Romanist or Libertine, who would not have done the same—Luther perhaps excepted, and that only because of his instincts and against his principles. Servetus himself would have burnt Calvin according to his teaching in his *Christianismi Restitutio*. As well condemn Sir Matthew Hale as a monster of injustice because he sentenced witches to be burned, as Calvin for taking part, and that a mitigating one, in the execution of Servetus.

But why plead in any wise for Calvin or Calvinism? Their works praise them in the gate, and speak for both. Never since the beginning of Christianity has any man or system produced such immense, heavenly, and heroic fruits. That great mountain has sheltered many a valley, shaped by its rise and lying at its foot. That deep digging and ploughing has made fruitful many a barren waste. That fountain of Divine grace has parted into a fourfold river, and made paradise on every side. Nearly all the heroisms, most of the liberties, much of the highest wisdom and character of these three hundred years, trace themselves back straight to that lonely man. The children of his home died and left him solitary; the children of his spirit grew a great and mighty nation. The last and best biographer of Calvin, Kampschulte, points out that his Reformation is the only one that steps beyond the limits of his birthplace. Huss was more a political and Bohemian Reformer. Luther's Reformation, while deeply Christian, having its roots nourished by relations to his "dear German nation," has never struck kindly in any other soil. Calvin,

living in Geneva, a free city, put off the Frenchman as he put off the Romanist, and came forth in his system a man and a Christian. From his hands the Reformation became a movement independent of nationality, and produced a truly Christian and Catholic Church. Hence the breadth of his influence has touched all orders of mind. The highest in genius and culture rise in their mien of soul and measure of praise as they look up to him; and many a peasant, with God's grace stirring mightily within, amidst a poor lot and dreary toils, has felt the bracing air of his stern doctrine and noble aims. Pass out from Geneva. See how he moved through and joined together the Swiss Reformed Churches, and had all but gained over into union the German Reformation too. See how, though he never revisited his old France, yet his soul marched on at the head of the Huguenots, and but for black St. Bartholomew, had made France the central Christian power in Europe. See how in France also, a hundred years after, it was his truth indirectly felt that roused the grand and saintly spirits of Port Royal. These two men, Calvin and Pascal, have lifted up the French mind out of its usual chasm into an unwonted sublimity. In Holland Calvin gave a body to the meditations which had been cherished by Thomas à Kempis in the serene air of his monastery, and created its noble army of 36,000 martyrs. Calvin's voice in his letters was a word from an emperor; when about to die they saluted him. Ten years of added life to Edward VI., and Calvin, in his Reformation, would have shaped English Christianity, and saved us from a conflict which is again deepening around us at this hour. As it was, he was the teacher

and inspirer of the Puritans; and men like Oliver Cromwell and John Milton, John Bunyan and John Howe, John Owen, and though differing in opinion, yet like in spirit, Richard Hooker, can answer well for the nobleness and beauty of souls that surrender themselves to Divine grace. Shall we forget to call Scotland to bear testimony? John Knox was, as Guizot says, no disciple of Calvin, but an equal; yet he learned much from him, and Scotland to this hour owes much of its Reformation to the sovereign intellect and example of Calvin. And was not the whole Covenanting struggle one for Divine grace, spiritual independence, and human liberty? Our own old Secession and Relief Churches called no man master but Christ, yet they looked up to Calvin as one of His best scholars; and in later years under Chalmers, and in a revived Christianity and the Free Church, the old truth has given new tokens of its undying power. In Germany also the only system that has broken up Rationalism is that of Schleiermacher, which asserts, though with many defects, the person of Christ and the power of grace. But time would fail to tell of all the victories of the truth. It is the great spiritual force at this moment in America, for the Pilgrim Fathers carried Calvin with them, and it still lives in strength amid thousands of churches, and has been embodied afresh, and with marvellous skill and learning, in the great book of Charles Hodge, the patriarch of Presbyterianism. And away in far-off islands of the seas and in continents to east and west, these principles rescue multitudes at this hour from heathenism, and bear fruit in homes of piety and churches of God. I venture then to claim for Calvinism, or rather

the Christianity which it in good measure represents, a power no future age can exhaust. Its difficulties, after all, lie in its high thoughts and holy living ; and these, while they awe and sometimes repel, at last attract and win men. The future of the Church and the world is contended for by these three—Romanism, Rationalism, and pure Christianity. I have no fear for the issue. There may be swayings to and fro over the wide battle-field of contest, but I am sure that the army that has deep convictions of sin, and lofty views of God and His grace, has elements of intellectual truth, moral power, and Divine reinforcement that shall gain the day. These elements shall emerge after every failure, and at last stand fast and for ever. These are truest to God and to man, for God's praise and for man's good ; and these meet in Him who has redeemed man from his lowest sin, by that death on the Cross in which He has revealed God in His highest glory.

## V.

*JOHN KNOX.*

THERE are certain great eras in the history of the human mind, in entering upon which we feel as the traveller who, after many a dreary plain, passes into the midst of Alpine mountains and valleys. Walking at twilight alone he gazes with intense interest on the grand masses lifted up against the sky, and reaching far into it; and as he slowly carries his eye downward, the rich deep levels stretching towards the noble lake, and sprinkled with hamlet and village, fill up the harvest of his thoughtful view. So it is when from the tameness and noise of lower levels in the world's history, we place ourselves in the centre of a great spiritual and intellectual landscape. There noble forms of thought and character that claim kindred with the heavens, men of surpassing spiritual range and height—some standing alone in their marked individuality, others rising together in groups as if cast in the same mould—first meet the eye, which, turning from these, kindles as it beholds lying all around under their shadow and protection, among humble hearts and happy homes and busy multitudes, the wide-spread blessings of an earnest piety, a sober thoughtfulness, and a cheerful toil.

If our traveller, however, be a man of science and inquiry, he will feel his interest deepened when he remembers that the calm and glorious scene before him is the outgrowth of fierce antagonisms, violent displacements, and slowly working change.

So it is with us if we clearly understand the great epochs of human progress. There is not a new and noble thought, or principle, or character, but has been fused in heat, darkness, and struggle, and when it was flung forth because it could no longer be kept back, it had to make room for itself by casting aside the false and superstitious; and thus it stands before us at once a monument of progress and a barrier against invasion.

It is in this spirit especially that we should take our stand and look abroad upon the gathering storms that mark the opening of the sixteenth century, the century of the Reformation. It is the greatest boundary period in the history of the world since that which saw the entrance of Christianity. In fact, it was the same great principles coming to meet the new forms of human tyranny and superstition.

And nobly was the way paved for these great principles. Fresh influences, and those of the most quickening kind, sent their ploughshare through minds that had long lain fallow. The great men of past ages became alive again in their newly found and widespread books. The old Greek, Roman, and Hebrew thinkers opened up their free and teeming pages to those wearied with the artificial routine of their prescribed range. Copernicus altered the contemplation of the heavens, and helped to overturn the old system of philosophy by his new astronomy. The Americas were added on the left hand, and on the right India

was made accessible; above all, the Word of God was set free, and became the Book of the people. The world moved on in more senses than one, and was drifting on, tacking hither and thither for some secure haven.

Feudalism of all kinds was breaking up. The burgher classes gradually rose to importance, enriched by the increasing commerce and sharpened by the spreading enlightenment, and balanced their influence against kings and nobles. The scholars and wits no longer bowed to the infallibility of the ancient masters. It was not long before priestly feudalism also was questioned.

At this time the reformers appeared. They are men all bearing a distinct family likeness, men intensely conscious of the wants of their times, who having battled with and mastered in their own hearts its anxious questions, and having themselves become free through the grace and truth of God, could advance to the help of others. Let us devote ourselves to the study of one of the best among them—John Knox, the Reformer of Scotland. He was born at the village of Gifford, in Haddington, in the year 1505. Never, perhaps, for centuries had things looked more quiet. But it was the pause of stillness before the wave that has been long gathering in breadth breaks upon the shore. In the same year Luther reached his manhood and rushed from the world to the Erfurt monastery. Zwingle left the sublime solitudes of his Alpine home, and amidst the stirring elements of kindred minds in Basle, received into his heart the great discovery of free pardon through Christ. Philip Melancthon was a boy of eight years, playing with the armour in his

father's shop, and listening to the rhymes of his gentle-tempered mother, far in the small town of Bretten in the Palatinate. Four years after Calvin was born in the south of France.

John Knox's father sent him to the grammar-school of Haddington, one of the most celebrated at that time in Scotland. What progress he made we cannot tell, as the whole of his boyhood has been left unrecorded. Little more than Latin was then taught; but we can scarcely doubt that the man who studied Greek in middle life, and knew nothing of Hebrew till he was fifty, and then eagerly mastered it, must have been no idle boy.

It is only when he leaves for the University that we begin to see the living mind of the future reformer. Glasgow had become some sixty years before a seat of learning, and there Knox matriculated in 1522. I have some notion, for I have gone through the experience, how the Haddington grammar-school lad felt as he passed under the heavy archway into the world of the University. He might have thought, one day I shall become Archbishop of Glasgow. He could hardly have thought that after three centuries his monument as the Reformer of Scotland would look down on the noble cathedral under whose roof he so often knelt.

But now he has entered upon his studies. A celebrated doctor, John Mair by name, had recently come from one of the oldest universities of Europe—that of Paris—and drew to his class young men from every quarter. He was one of the driest of lecturers and most rigid of schoolmen, but he had brought from Paris opinions that were new to the ears of Scotchmen. Our young student hears him, with some uneasiness,

mingled with pleasure, asserting such things as these : that a general council was superior to the Pope, and might, if necessary, depose him from his dignity ; that papal excommunications had no force if pronounced on irrelevant or invalid grounds ; and that avarice and ambition were prevalent in the Church of Rome and the Episcopal order. Listening to interesting novelties like these, Knox did not grudge to follow his teacher through the bristling distinctions and tedious details of Aristotelian metaphysics, scholastic theology, and canon law.

There was, moreover, a charm for him in these studies. They opened up views to him of dark questions, set forth with all the ingenuity of such men as Aquinas and Scotus, and they gave full employment to a mind like his, with its boldness and patience, its untried strength and untamed pride.

He was never a man who could half assent to anything. His soul needed reality, and therefore he rose so high in his acquaintance with the learning of the day that he lectured upon it with great distinction, and before he had reached the canonical age of twenty-five he was ordained a priest. Thus he continued till his thirtieth year, and whatever may have been his occasional misgivings, he held fast to his old moorings while the world was strongly moving in a contrary direction, but when he did shift his ground it took seven long years of search and struggle to make sure again his footing. Knox was one of those natures that are long and late in growing, and in whom great changes are effected only by a heavy pressure, and at last by a fearful wrench ; but when they are made there is no retracing of the steps. This is the main

thing that gives a tinge of melancholy to, and withal forms a point of peculiar interest in the whole career of our noble hero. Unlike in this to our other reformers. The wild and mighty elements of Luther's character drove him on from crisis to crisis in his inward revolution, and after a few years of tremendous conflict of soul and body he was swept right across the threshold of the Roman Church. Zwingli's free Swiss nature, drawn out by the boundless sweep of the Alps around him, moved swift as an avalanche which the warm breath of spring has touched. Melancthon's mild, womanly spirit suffered little in the transition, for it took place when he was but a lad; and so with Calvin. His inflexible reasoning powers—the conscience, so to speak, of his understanding—did for him what strong heart-passions did for Luther, and when twenty-five he was the finished man in principles he ever was.

But with Knox the crisis began when with most men the mind has hardened in the mould in which it remains ever after. We doubt not, however, the tedious process through which he passed gave a decision to his after deeds; certainly we owe to it in a great measure the completeness of the Reformation in Scotland.

But ere we trace the steps of Knox in his conversion, let us in one or two sentences see what was the state of matters outside of the University. Scotland was at that time the most Popish country in Europe. Farther than most from Rome, superstition and credulity were not undeceived by a near view of the pagan tastes, undisguised unbelief, and sensual talk and practice of the Vatican. That there should be

slums around St. Peter's the ignorant Scotch never dreamt, and therefore their first and only cardinal, Beaton, had no difficulty in repressing suspicions. It is rather ominous indeed that just when Scotland got a cardinal she was beginning not to need one. Besides, I do not imagine that the Scotch people were much given to thinking about these things. The *præfervidum ingenium*, the hot and hasty spirit which has since given to the world such poets as Burns, and orators as Brougham and Chalmers, was wasted in interminable raids across the Borders, when they visited their gentle sister, England, or in redding their marches amidst quarrel and bloodshed with the neighbouring barons' domains. Popery and feudalism drained the energies of a country into which the Reformation put a soul, and from that time to this few nations have sent forth abler men into public life—none has been filled with a more thoughtful and sagacious people.

The Church of Rome in Scotland was in a fearfully corrupt state. It possessed more than half the wealth of the nation. From cardinal to curate it was tainted with the grossest immorality. Bishops avowedly kept their harlots, and the parish priest was the corrupter of his neighbourhood. Their learning was equally imperfect—seventeen volumes, all in manuscript, formed a very respectable library for a considerable monastery; and when you look at the character of the books you can easily understand their influence. In that of Stirling there was a copy of the Gospels and Epistles in manuscript, four missals, two psalters, four antiphonies, three breviaries, two legends, four graduals, and three processional. Many of the clergy, and even

bishops, had never heard of the New Testament. It was affirmed by them "that Martin Luther had lately composed a wicked book called the New Testament, but that they, for their part, would adhere to the Old Testament."

Bishops never preached. Here is one of their attempts. The Archbishop of Glasgow, addressing his jackmen and some old women at Ayr, when Wishart had roused his zeal, said—"They say we sould preiche. Quhy not? Better lait thryve nor never thryve. Had us still for your bischope, and we sall provide better the next tyme." The priests in their discourses were employed in awful denunciations of purgatorial fire, or in ridiculous announcements of village gossip. The pulpit was the advertising sheet of that day. Such were common things. "The priest," says Knox, "standeth up on the Sabbath and crieth, 'Anne hath lost her spindle; there is a flail stolen from behind the barn; the good wife on the other side hath lost a horn spoon; God's curse and mine rest on him that knoweth of the goods and restoreth them not.'"

But now, even in Scotland, the tremblings of the European movement began to be felt. Traders from France to Leith and Dundee brought the books that Luther and others were printing. In 1525 an Act of Parliament was passed against such importations, alleging as a reason why Scotland should be free from them, that "it is a kingdom which has alwaies been clere of sic filth and vice." Two years later Patrick Hamilton, only twenty-four years of age, returned from Wittenberg and Marburg, glowing with a desire to enlighten his countrymen, and was burnt at St. Andrews. "The reek, however, of that stake

infected all on whome it fell ;” and martyr after martyr only excited the imagination and curiosity of the people. The fires that lighted the way of these noble men to heaven threw their glare upon the dark and foul corners of the Church, and helped the people to see their bondage. •

The cause advanced. Scotland had again been able to produce martyrs, and her deliverance was at hand. James V. died in 1542 ; next year Parliament declared it lawful for every subject to read the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue. Queen Mary was born, and in that year also, at the age of thirty-seven, John Knox openly avowed Protestantism.

We left Knox a young priest, twenty-five years of age. Five years that fascinating thing called the Church of the Middle Ages bound his faith and sufficed for his life. But as the mighty roar of the world without sounded in his attentive ear, and the deep current of the European mind ruffled the calm course of his private thoughts, and as his soul was of the sort that loved to listen to “the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting,” he abandoned the schoolmen, and betook himself to the study of Augustine. I would gladly speak to you of this greatest of men that has appeared in the Church since the days of John and Paul. He has played a most influential part in the making of the minds by which other minds have been made. Great in his sins, in his penitence, in his Divine love ; great in his marvellous logic and in his piercing insight, he was the father of Anselm and Aquinas, the greatest of the schoolmen ; of Luther and Calvin, the ablest of the reformers ; of Jansenius and Pascal, the noblest of Romanists ; of Schleier-

macher and Neander, the leaders of the second Reformation. Hundreds of great minds have passed through Augustine on their way to Christ; yet Augustine, as an ecclesiastic, supported Church theories and principles, while his deeper nature clung to the grace of God, and to faith in Christ.

John Knox was much benefited by the study of this great man's writings. But Augustine led him to the Scriptures, and there he remained; and whether a man come from the dark clouds of superstition or the dreary glare of scepticism, the first entrance of the mild and sweet light of Scripture is by its tender and strengthening influence something unspeakably fresh and soothing. It was one of the great features of the Reformation that the learned class was the religious class—men whose struggles had been first for peace with God, and whose wisdom, wit, and eloquence were therefore transfigured by its calm and holy power.

We should think John Knox was now ready for his work, but he did not think so. The man who could front the face of kings, hid his face in a mantle, like that brother spirit of old, Elijah, when the Lord passed by. Knox was an humble man, as all great spirits are. When thirty-nine he used to follow, as hearer and disciple, the celebrated George Wishart; and after that apostolic man was brought to the stake, he returned to teach his three or four young lads as tutor in an East Lothian family. This is to my mind one of the noble traits in Knox, that he never took a public step till he was forced to it; but when he did so there was no driving him back. Cromwell, a man of the same make and mettle, lived at St. Ives and Ely, sowing his fields, gathering his farm-servants around

him to prayer, and trying to walk humbly with God till about the same age ; but when he did come forth it was to lead others, and to lose no time.

After George Wishart's martyrdom, Cardinal Beaton, his persecutor, was slain, and the castle of St. Andrews occupied by his enemies. It became a place of safety for others, and there Knox and his boys went.

John Rough was preacher in the castle, and Knox was hearer. His abilities were recognised by all, but they could not persuade him to preach. At last they took him by guile, and gave him a gospel call in this manner. After sermon Rough turned to Knox, and exhorted him "to take the public office and charge of preaching even as you look to avoid God's heavy displeasure, and desire that He shall multiply His graces unto you." Overwhelmed by the address Knox tried to speak—burst into tears—rushed out and hid himself in his chamber. For days his countenance showed his grief and trouble of heart. Ah ! such is the stuff of which Knox and mighty men are made. I read in his life of two scenes of weeping. Queen Mary wept because the plain, earnest man told her the truth ; but I leave any one to say whether the tears of sensitive and petulant loveliness are at all so affecting as the tears of this deep heart, when its flood-gates were broken up by what he felt to be a command from God.

There is an interesting coincidence in the religious history of Scotland that deserves to be noticed.

Scotland has had three great religious movements ; the first against popery, the second against prelacy, the third against patronage. Three parishes lying next each other are famous because of the residence

of the three leaders. John Knox began to preach in St. Andrews, and in a castle, as befitted him; Alexander Henderson in the next village, Leuchars; and as you pass onwards you light on the manse and church of Kilmany, where, after thirteen years of coldness and formality, the noble spirit of Thomas Chalmers, after a baptism of tears and the Holy Ghost, began, Knox-like, a new career.

Knox had scarcely begun the work ere he was sent adrift again to learn more in different schools.

The French at length got possession of the castle of St. Andrews, and for nearly nineteen months he was a prisoner in their galleys, loaded with chains and working at the oar.

But there, amidst great faintings of spirit, he wrote a book on prayer and a confession of his faith. He was upheld otherwise. They would make him one day give a kiss of adoration to the image of the Virgin, and on his refusal thrust it upon him. Throwing it into the river he exclaimed, "Let our Lady save herself, she is light enough; let her learn to swim." The galley slave was the purest man among them. Nor did he lose hope in his future mission. Men's minds are in times like these raised into earnest prophetic moods, for when lying sick and near death, one day as the ship lay off between Dundee and St. Andrews, seeing the steeple of the old cathedral in the distance, his eye and his soul kindled, and he said, "Yes, I know it well, for I see the steeple of that church where God first opened my mouth in public to His glory, and I am fully persuaded how weak soever I may appear, that I shall not depart this life, till this my tongue shall glorify His godly name in the same place."

This holy and prophetic desire of Knox, however, waited long for its gratification. God gave him a time of rest and opportunity of learning in the next years of his life.

Being excommunicated from Scotland, he proceeded to England. There he was warmly received by Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, who under the good King Edward was struggling to carry on the work of the Reformation. The few years of this pious prince's reign, standing between Henry VIII. and Mary, are a key to all the subsequent troubles in the Church of England. It is impossible to enter upon them, but this much is needful to be said, that Knox had here a lesson in the true way of conducting the way of the Reformation.

Henry VIII., unfortunately, was the first reformer of England. His arbitrary transference of spiritual supremacy from the Pope to himself, his retention of the ignorant priests and many of the superstitious forms of popery, and at the same time the true reforming principles among the people that mingled their share with these other and heterogeneous elements, explain the interminable struggle that has never ceased to trouble and threaten the existence of the National Establishment.

Here are the germs of the great parties of the present day: the Broad Church, with their adherence to royal prerogative; the Puseyite, with their leaning towards Romanist rites and tenets; and the Evangelical, with their love of the pure Gospel. It is due to Knox to state these things, because in England he is reckoned an extreme man. The fact is, Cranmer, Latimer, Hooper, and Jewel were of the same mind with him

in most of his views of doctrine, polity, and worship. These men set before them as their model the Calvinistic and Presbyterian Churches of Zurich and Geneva, but from many causes they could not reach it, and when Edward VI. died, popery again rose into power. It is known to very few that Knox was a preacher in the Church of England, though in many things an allowed nonconformist; that he was consulted about the Book of Common Prayer; that he had influence to procure an important change in the Communion Office, completely excluding the notion of the corporeal presence of Christ; that he was one of the court chaplains, and that he had offered to him a bishopric which he refused.\*

What might have been his influence in England had God permitted his residence there, we know not. When, however, Queen Mary ascended the throne, he had to flee, not to Scotland indeed, for there another Mary, she of Guise, awaited him, but to the Continent. After a troubled interval in Frankfort, at the desire of the English congregation, he crossed the Jura, entered Geneva, and first stood face to face with Calvin.

Calvin was at this time the greatest man in Europe. Luther had died eight years earlier, grey-headed and weary of the strife, and laid, his mighty heart now still, in the church on whose doors he fastened his ninety-five theses. Geneva was now to the Reformation what Wittenberg had been at the beginning; and there the soul of every movement was John Calvin. Few men have been more blackened and misunderstood; and yet I know of none by whose matchless coherence of thought, passionate sense of unworthiness, complete

\* Lorimer, "John Knox in England, in Newcastle, and Berwick."

prostration before the majesty of God, child-like love of the Saviour, and unwearied zeal and labour for the progress of holiness, the mind is so affected, and almost awed, as by those of this man. Looking at him from a distance, he stands like the Mont Blanc he beheld every day, cold, sad, solitary, and sublime; but drawing nearer, we discover beneath this loftiness of soul, and ennobled by it, many of the tenderest graces and sweetest affections.

So John Knox felt it, and till the end of Calvin's life, when he was in Scotland, he received his letters and rejoiced in his friendship.

We should have liked to have sat by these two men some day in 1556 in Calvin's study in Geneva. Calvin preaches every day, writes letters to all Europe, composes books full of profound thought, consults with the magistrates, and this has gradually worn out his strength. There he stands (I shall never forget his portrait in the public library in Geneva) with his high, square brow, his piercing eye, his thin-cut lips, his whole face of unearthliness, study, and self-denial. He could not but recognise in Knox a brother—a younger one certainly in learning and intellect, but his match in simplicity of character, his superior in ready popular speech and rich vein of shrewd Scotch humour. Knox has none of Calvin's deep and subtle speculation in his eye, but it is keen, straight-looking, and withal, melancholy, as of a man who has seen sorrow; and there is in his lips, if not the finer traits of genius, yet a defiant compression, and you know, should he open them, words to purpose and of pith would not be wanting.

Knox spent in Geneva the quietest part of his

troubled life,\* but his heart yearned after his native land. Letter after letter was sent by him, and at last the time came when he should return. Once and again he did so, till in 1559 he came back never again to visit Geneva. "Grave men," he says, "were melted into tears at my departure." By this time many of the best nobles in the land were thoroughly Protestant; the people hated the French Regent for her duplicity, and the French troops for swarming among them; Elizabeth of England was ready to back them. When Knox came his presence gave confidence to all. As a counsellor of the nobles, as a champion of the people, his influence acted powerfully in controlling or impelling as was needed.

Of all the Reformations, that of Scotland was the last and best. It had grown in strength during forty years. It touched the national mind at every point. The spirit of Wallace, as well as of Knox, moved over the land. Neither the nobles nor the people would submit to be governed by French soldiers and French cardinals. The Divine right of monarchy was flung away, and the great principle that power comes of the people, and must be used for their behoof, was practically asserted by deposing the Queen Regent and placing the government in other hands. Above all, the people were wearied of popery, and needed only that their Protestantism should be declared. Hence everything proceeded regularly and so peacefully that not a single Papist was put to death for his opinions.

John Knox hurried up and down the country, preaching wherever he went the full and free pardon of the Gospel and exposing Popish idolatry and super-

\* Dr. Lorimer's "Researches in Geneva."

stition. At last he reached St. Andrews. Things were there trembling in the balance. The Bishop sent him word that, "In case John Knox presented himself at the preaching-place in his town and principal church, he should make him to be saluted by a dozen of culverines, whereof the most part should light upon his nose." But Knox called to remembrance his assured hope ten years ago in the galleys, and in spite of all he entered and preached. So powerfully had he preached, that the provost, bailies, and inhabitants agreed to set up the reformed worship in the town. The cathedral was stripped of images and pictures, and the monasteries were pulled down.

Some writers, over-jealous in matters of taste, and looking coldly, moreover, upon the reformation of which Knox was the advocate, have been unable to forget, and unwearied in denouncing such barbarous deeds. The fact, however, is, that Knox was indignant at the excesses of the rabble, and in his usual emphatic style was not slow to proclaim them as the rascal multitude, for demolishing buildings so much needed as places of worship according to the reformed manner. He could, indeed, see how the removal of objects that had so long enslaved the mind and fascinated the imagination of a rude and superstitious people might be accompanied with anything but injury to their advancement in a purer faith and more spiritual worship; and looking at the matter in this light, the old proverb was easily applicable: "Down with these crow-nests, else the crows will big (build) in them again." There was, however, a better reason than this given by a woman in Perth, who, when the flames of the monasteries in that town were rising to heaven, and

some were lamenting their destruction, exclaimed, that if they knew the scenes of villainy and debauchery that had passed within these walls they would "admire the judgment of heaven in bringing these haunts of pollution to such an end." Shortly after, in the month of August 1560, Parliament met and sanctioned the establishment of Protestantism. Knox, with others, drew up a Confession of Faith, which was read over article by article. The close of all this turmoil is interesting. The Earl of Athol, with the Lords Somerville and Borthwick, were the only persons who voted against it, assigning the truly catholic reason—We will believe as our forefathers believed. The Bishops spake nothing. Knox was removed to Edinburgh. Not contented with what had been done, he pressed upon the Parliament the duties they owed to the Church and the nation.

He stood up for the education of the people. In the "First Book of Discipline" he required that out of the old Church lands and tithes there should be so much appropriated as would build a school in every parish. But he went further than this, and proposed that a college should be erected in every "notable town," in which logic and rhetoric should be taught, along with the learned languages. He would provide at the public expense for the education of the children of the poor who discovered talents for learning; and all these in addition to the three national universities. Men are only now-a-days thinking that it would be a great matter to have a peoples' college and library in Liverpool, Manchester, and Glasgow. Had it rested with John Knox alone, Scotland would have had these in every large town three hundred years ago. The

fact is, instead of being a rude fanatic and harsh bigot, there was no man in Scotland who threw himself more warmly into the progress of thought and learning; and there are few men in England now who would be bold enough to plan schemes of popular instruction so sweeping and comprehensive. He could be no narrow-minded ascetic who would have every young apprentice and working-man in his beloved Scotland an adept in logic and rhetoric and the learned languages. The nobles, and with them the good Regent Murray, shrugged their shoulders and pronounced the plan "a devout imagination."

From this time John Knox, as a true tribune of the people, was never at peace with the nobles as a body. There was a good reason for their opposition. Most of them had seized upon Church lands, others had taken long leases of them for small sums of money, or got friends appointed bishops who transmitted to them ample compensation. These last were called by the shrewd Scotch "Tulchan bishops," such being the name given to a calf-skin filled with straw, to which, nevertheless, the cow readily yielded up her milk.

Knox's spirit was roused to indignation against such unworthy meanness. "Well," said he, "if the end of this order, pretended to be taken for the maintenance of the ministers, be happy, my judgment fails me; for I am assured that God is not the author of it, for first I see two parts given to the devil, and one-third must be divided between God and the devil."

But Knox had other troubles to encounter—nobles who were so greedy of gain would not be apt to stand firm when the cause of religion was in danger. Scot-

land could look to none but to himself to save her from the insidious aggression of the old popery.

During the year of 1561 that immediately succeeded the Parliament which sanctioned the Reformation, the young widow of the dauphin of France, and queen of Scotland, returned to the palace of her fathers in Edinburgh. Mary at that time was only nineteen years of age. Educated by her uncles of Lorraine and Guise, in France, in the Divine right of kings over their subjects, and in the infallible certainty of the Romish faith, unchecked in her self-will and natural freedom of manner, in the gayest and most dissolute court of Europe, she came back to assume the government of Scotland. The result was confusion, misery, misconduct, and at last death. There are two portraits of Mary in the great gallery of Hardwick Hall, that tell the sad history of twenty-seven long years. We see her in the first as she was when she set foot in Scotland. Looking upon it there is a light and delicacy about the whole face that fulfil all we have heard of her surpassing beauty. The smooth rounded forehead, the hazel eye, the soft auburn hair, the cheeks most delicately tinted, the finely formed lips, and all pervaded by a quick expression of young enjoyment; these when once seen can never be forgotten. The other is a dark melancholy picture, a large full-length, in black, with a cross and rosary, with little beauty, and a heavy shadow on the brow, and in the eye a timidity approaching to terror, as if she were listening to the step of some enemy. Poor Mary! Beauty and long years of loneliness and bitter imprisonment, and at length death, calmly welcomed as a relief to the worn-out heart, have shaken the

judgment of the wise, and shed the tears of the condemning. Still, had her wishes been fulfilled, three centuries of piety and progress in Scotland had been awaiting to us, and another Ireland had darkened the glory of our country.

Mary came from France, determined at all hazards to re-establish popery. In a few days after her arrival, John Knox was called to her presence. She charged him among other things with encouraging subjects to resist their rulers. "Think you," said she, "that subjects, having the power, may resist their princes?" "If princes," Knox replied, "exceed their bounds, madam, no doubt they may be resisted even by power. For no greater honour, nor greater obedience, is to be given to kings and princes than God has commanded to be given to father and mother. But the father may be struck with a frenzy, in which he would slay his children. Now, madam, if the children apprehend the father, and take the sword from him, and keep him in prison till the frenzy be over, think you, madam, the children do any wrong? Even so, madam, it is with princes, who would murder the children of God that are subject to them." The conversation then turned on religion. "Ye are not," said Mary, "the kirk that I will nourish. I will defend the Kirk of Rome; for it is, I think, the true Kirk of God." "Your will, madam," replied Knox, "is no reason; neither doth your thought make the Roman Church to be the true and immaculate Spouse of Jesus Christ." He added that the Roman Church had degenerated farther than the Jewish Church which crucified Christ. "My conscience is not so," said the queen. "Conscience, madam, requires knowledge, and I fear that right

knowledge you have none." On taking his leave, the Reformer said, "I pray God, madam, that you may be as blessed within the commonwealth of Scotland as ever Deborah was in the commonwealth of Israel."

One is at great loss to discover in these earnest statements, and that most loyal and Christian prayer, the barbarous address or "bigot scowl," as even Sir Walter Scott calls it, that in the minds of some, seem to make up their whole idea of our Reformer. This, moreover, comes with a bad grace from writers avowedly popish, who should know, that had Mary been a Protestant queen in a Romish country in those times, a measure harder than the hardest words would have been dealt out to her, her crown would not have been secure to her for an hour, and her very life little more so.

Not long after, Queen Mary wished to marry a papist, Henry Darnley. The nobles were by this time under the influence of the court. Some had even the effrontery to declare that they had neither law nor parliament for their religion.

John Knox did not spare them, as they came to hear him in St. Giles', and warned them of the consequences that would arise if they gave their consent to the union of their sovereign with a papist.

Again he was sent for; Mary fell into a passion, declaring that in all ways she had tried to please him, "And yet I cannot be quit of you; I vow to God I shall be avenged one day." Hereupon she burst into tears. "What have you to do with my marriage?" she said, "or what are you in this commonwealth?" "A subject born within it," answered the Reformer; "and albeit I be neither earl, lord, or baron in it; yet has

God made me (how abject that ever I be in your eyes) a profitable member within the same." As he left the room with a merry countenance, some of the popish attendants said, in his hearing, "He is not afraid." "Why should the pleasing face of a gentlewoman affray me?" said he (regarding them with a sarcastic scowl); "I have looked in the face of many angry men, and yet have not been affrayed above measure."

For many years he fought the court and nobles alone, not for himself, but for the cause of Christ and the people of Scotland, who looked to him as their unflinching friend.

At last he was worn out. Of a small and frail stature, he could bear but little more. His friend, the good Regent Murray, was assassinated, and it affected him so violently that he was seized with apoplexy. They fired at him through the window of his old house in the Canongate, and he was glad to retire for a while to St. Andrews.

There the old man used to walk in the courts of the College talking to the students. His soul went out to the young hopes of those who should succeed him in the great work. On the Sabbaths he preached to the people of the town, and as he was, next to Luther, the greatest popular orator of the Reformation, it is right we should let you know how he preached. An eye-witness thus describes it:—

"I had my pen and little book, and took such things as I could comprehend.

"In the opening up of his text he was moderate. The space of half-an-hour he made me so to thrill and tremble that I could not hold a pen to write. He was very weak. I saw him every day of his doctrine go

slowly and wearily, with a furring of matriks about his neck, a staff in one hand, and good, godly Richard Ballenden, his servant, holding up the other oxters, from the abbey to the parish kirk, and by the said Richard and another servant lifted into the pulpit, where he behoved to lean at his first entry ; but ere he had done with his sermon he was so active and vigorous that he was like to beat the pulpit into pieces and flie out of it."

He returned to Edinburgh to ordain his successor. He never preached more powerfully, and after the sermon he was led slowly from his beloved church to the old house, never more to go out a living man.

His death was simple and noble, not without those genial gleams of humour and sterner struggles of spirit that all along characterised the man.

When very sick some friends called on him, and they would have left, but he would have them stay till a hogshead of wine in his cellar should be pierced for them, adding, with a hilarity he indulged in when with those he loved, "That they should send for some of it so long as it lasted, for he would not tarry till it was all drunk."

When near his last hour he had a most fearful assault of temptation. "The cunning serpent," he said, "has laboured to persuade me that I have merited heaven and eternal life and blessedness by the faithful discharge of my ministry. But blessed be God, who suggested some such passages of Scripture as these: 'What hast thou that thou hast not received?' 'By the grace of God I am what I am;' 'Not I, but the grace of God in me.' Upon this, as one vanquished, he left me."

At last they thought him asleep and prayed for him.

They asked him if he heard the prayers. "Would to God," said he, "that you and all men had heard them as I have heard them; I praise God for that heavenly sound. Now," he said, with a deep sigh, "*it is come.*" They repeated holy promises of Scripture, and asked him to give a sign that he heard them, and died in peace. He lifted up one of his hands and fell asleep.

I can imagine the long silence in that old house as it drew near the midnight of that day in the November of 1572. Looking upon that face, thin, furrowed, and now peaceful in death, the whole life of the man would rise up in their hearts with its incessant toil, its complete unselfishness, its exceeding jealousy for the Lord of Hosts, its grand trust and courage drawn from the crucified One. When they buried him on Wednesday, Earl Morton pronounced his eulogium in these words, "Here lies one who never feared the face of man."

And now when we look back through the ages since he departed, we see everywhere the noble features of his character, and the deep indentations of his principles.

Scotland owes everything she has of value to this man. There is not a great movement in her history but has followed in his track. The heroic Covenanters, the free-minded Seceders, the self-denying Disruptionists, took much of their shape and impulse from the great Reformer. And just in proportion as the good and pious men in the Church of Scotland have been animated by his principles, have they won the affections of the people and spread the cause of Christ. England also owes to him the first movements of her protracted struggle with the House of Stuart. The Presbyterianism of the Long Parliament was his—Cromwell followed right in his spirit—and the glorious Revolu-

tion of 1688 was but the carrying out of those constitutional and religious principles, the declaration of which by Knox drew tears from Mary, and has drawn down upon himself calumny and misrepresentation to this very hour.

We need not then stay to defend him ; his works praise him in the gates. Nor does he care about it now.

For ourselves no better wish could be formed than this : that in each one present there were the same spiritual struggle, humility, and faith in Jesus Christ, as in Knox.

For our country, could prayers effect it, we should exclaim, Oh ! for an hour of John Knox, to rally the timid, to resist the opposing, and to show us what men they were who in other times rolled back the darkness of centuries, that we may not yield a foot-breadth of the glorious inheritance they have bequeathed us, but in their spirit, and, above all, in the spirit of the Great Redeemer and Saviour of the world, their Lord and ours, may go forward to do the work of our own day.

“Lives of great men all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime,  
And departing, leave behind us  
Footprints in the sands of time :

Footprints, that perhaps another  
Sailing o’er life’s solemn main,  
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,  
Seeing may take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,  
With a heart for any fate ;  
Still achieving, still pursuing,  
Learn to labour and to wait.”

—LONGFELLOW.

## VI.

*JOHN MILTON.*

To introduce to this audience one of the greatest men in all history, perhaps the greatest of Englishmen, and certainly the greatest of Puritans, it is necessary simply to utter that name which can never be pronounced without awakening every feeling that eminence in genius, misfortune, patriotism, and piety can call forth.

It is now two hundred and seventy-one years since John Milton was born in Bread Street, London, on the ninth of December 1608. No reflecting man, as he hurries through Cheapside, can even, at this day, look down that narrow thoroughfare without being peculiarly interested with the remembrance of this event. He need not, however, step aside to visit the house, well known from having on its front the fitting sign of a spread eagle, for, since the fire of 1666, it has ceased to exist.

The remembrance and the results of the period of Milton's birth can never pass away. It was one of the most remarkable ages in all history, ranking with those of Pericles, in Greece; Augustus, in Rome; Luther, in Germany; Louis XIV., in France; and the French Revolution, with the forty years that followed

it, throughout Europe. It is certainly by far the most marked epoch in English history. If you take your stand upon the year 1608, and sweep round in a circle from 1560 to 1660, from the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth to that of Charles II., you will find that the time includes nearly all the greatest men and questions in British literature, politics, and religion. It was in the very centre of this creative and fertile era that Milton was born; and when death took him, the last of a mighty race of men disappeared. Into its large mould his mind was cast; to its powerful and searching influences he was subjected in his earliest years; and even he, however strongly reacting, could not fail to be affected by it.

It would be out of place to inquire into the causes that gave to this period its amazing freshness, profusion, and magnificence. It is sufficient to note that it followed the disenthraling time of the Reformation, and the advancing wealth and importance of the middle classes; and was accompanied by the chivalry and glories of the days of Queen Elizabeth. In every department the human mind was more powerful, active, and productive than perhaps it had ever been before. In the department of literature it stands unequalled. The names of Shakespeare, Spenser, Raleigh, Bacon; and further on, of Taylor, Browne, Barrow, Howe, Bunyan, and our own Milton, are names of men, not of mere taste or reasoning, but of original genius and immense learning. Nor in the department of politics was it less eminent. Then began and grew into strength the great conflict that added to Magna Charta the Petition of Right, and that closing in the Revolution settlement deserves to be studied and

revered as the birthday of British liberty and independence. For it was then that the Divine right of kings, their power of taxation and of arbitrary punishment, were discussed and denied. It was then that an Englishman's person, property, home, and thoughts were guaranteed his own for ever. It was, above all, the period of religious awakening and conflict. The first great European crisis, that between Rome and Reformation, was now nearly one hundred years old. In England the contest was taking another and a peculiar shape. There was in one part of the English Church a growing fondness for and adoption of the doctrines, rites, and government of the Church of Rome; a clinging to priestly powers, sacramental efficacy, and gorgeous ceremonies. In another part there was an equally strong determination to push the work of reformation to its Scriptural limits, and to recede in simplicity, purity, and liberty, farther and farther from Rome. Each of these tendencies is native to the human mind, and each of them found authority and room to work, from the standard books of the same Church. For the germ of the inextricable confusion which existed then, and exists still, lies in the Reformation of England having been a patchwork between the passions of Henry and the principles of Cranmer. It is a house which differs according to the point of view from which it is observed. Approach it from one side, and it looks like a piece of Roman architecture; but come to it from another, and it is solid plain Geneva work. Hence the Prelatic party of Milton's times, the Non-Jurors of William III., and the Puseyism of the present day. They were favoured with Laud in their times, we are blessed with Philpots in ours. And

hence also the Puritan party within the Church, non-conformity without, and the growth of a new Puritan party again within the Church in the evangelical clergy. The Ushers and Leightons of that time are just the Simeons and Bickersteths of this.

But these differences gave shape and impulse to the movements for individual and national liberty; and it is not difficult to see on what side each party would range itself. The Romanising party, opposing all independent action of mind in religious things, naturally set itself against the same in the social and political departments, and basing itself on arbitrary authority and Divine right, sympathised with the same principles when applied to support absolute monarchy and despotic power. The reforming party, on the other hand, asserting and employing liberty of thought and conscience in religion, carried the same principles into the state; liked the tyranny of James or Charles as little as that of Bancroft or Laud, and added to the power of their Puritanism the kindred power of their patriotism.

Thus, you can easily observe, the two parties were ranged against each other; their lines extending from point to point in the grand field of the dearest and most sacred human and divine rights. It was in the midst of this period, rising year by year to its crisis, that Milton was born.

It will be well, before we proceed, to mark out the main divisions of his life; and they are three in number. The first, extending from his birth in 1608 to his return from Italy in 1639, includes the whole course of his training for his future work; the second, reaching from 1639 to 1658, contains his political

and public career; and the third, beginning in 1658 and ending in his death in 1674, is rich with the latest fruits of his genius and wisdom, of which we need here mention "*Paradise Lost*" only.

The youth and early manhood of Milton are full of interest and instruction. We must beware of lingering too long upon a season that leads us up to the fountain-heads of a mind and character so original and finished, and to the first hopes and pursuits of a life that was to be continued amidst the thick of controversy, and ended in the seclusion of poverty and blindness. There are few things in all biography so attractive and instructing to young men as the youth of Milton.

In the father and mother of Milton, we find parents worthy of him. His father must have had all his son's independence: for becoming a Puritan at Oxford University he was disinherited by his old Popish father; and in him we find also the passion for music, next to that for liberty in Milton; for he was himself a composer of tunes sung to this day in our churches. His mother, a lady of good family, either from Wales or Lancashire, was of a gentle disposition.

In this quiet and elegant home Milton was reared. Unconscious of his existence, the greatest wits of England, Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Donne, Selden, and others, met in these years for their nightly entertainment in the Mermaid Tavern hard by in Friday Street. It is not too much to suppose, that Shakespeare may have seen the boy Milton; however that may be, it is pleasant to know of their being so near each other; it is full of rich suggestion to remember that Shakespeare died in 1616 at Stratford, when Milton, in his

eighth year, was beginning to think. These men represent their times—Shakespeare, the boundless, intellectual, and imaginative freedom of his—Milton, the concentrated and sublime moral purpose of his. It may be disputed, which is the greater poet; it cannot, which is the greater man. How much we miss, in the amazing Shakespearian range, that clearness and elevation of spiritual aim which would have added “the consecration” to the “Poet’s Dream” and made him, without any sad deductions, one of the greatest benefactors of men. Up to his fifteenth year, Milton was educated at home, and had as his tutor Thomas Young, a man who, because of his Puritanism, was forced in 1630 to leave his country and his cure, a man of piety, and as Milton himself says in an elegy he wrote to him—

“First led by him through sweet Aonian shade,  
Each sacred haunt of Pindus I surveyed.”

It is an immense mistake to suppose that Puritanism was merely “a small unsightly root, but of Divine effect,” as sour as it was strong; on the contrary, it ranked at this time amongst its numbers the majority of the best cultivated minds in England.

In his fifteenth year he went to St. Paul’s school, and to this year belong the first traces of his mind. Very characteristically they are versions of two of the Psalms, and in the handling of thought and language there is a manner that does not belie what he afterwards was. When seventeen he entered Cambridge, and continued there seven years. During this time, he continued to add to those stores of learning which he was afterwards to shape into higher creations. He

was a universal scholar. He was at home among the old sacred bards of the Bible; the poets of Greece,—Homer and Euripides especially; those of Rome, giving somewhat strangely the preference to Ovid; those of modern Europe, among whom his favourites were Dante, Tasso, Spenser, and Shakespeare. Nor must we omit what he himself dwells upon, the ardent love of his mind, “in the spacious circuits of her musings,” for the great poet-philosopher Plato, who at that time, and for many years after, formed most of the noblest Cambridge minds, and among others Jeremy Taylor, Henry More, and John Howe. From many minute references in his works, and from the great affinity between them, it is not to be doubted, that at this period at least, this wonderful Pagan Theologue, as Howe calls him, shed over his genius a purer light of wisdom and affection, amidst the dazzling images of poetry and the fascinating conflicts of politics. These were, however, but a small portion of his studies. Those only who have read annotations to Milton’s works can possibly be aware of his almost universal command, even to verbal imitation, of the whole of ancient and modern literature. It is well to bring out this for the purpose of showing that Milton possessed that genius for labour without which all other genius can never reach its perfect stature or perform its highest works.

The college time, however, was one of production also; and omitting his Latin elegies, which give us many fine touches of his young and fresh hopes, his English poems are by far the most remarkable. In the former he is more an echo of the ancients—in the latter we have the dawn and key-note of the future man.

The ode on the morning of Christ's nativity has, like Nineveh monuments, the arrow of the king upon it. It is weighty in thought, severe in sentiment, rich in allusion, varied and solemn in cadence, and worthy to inaugurate the twenty-first year of Milton's life. It is impossible to separate Milton's progress in poetry from his religious growth, as he himself expresses it in the sonnet on his twenty-third birthday :—

“All is, if I have grace to use it so,  
As ever in my great Task-master's eye.”

We never hear of any great crisis in the history of his soul considered apart from that of his genius. The sleepless anxiety of Cromwell in his twenty-fourth year, and the wild agonies of Bunyan, seem to have been unknown to him. Early training and the peculiar seriousness of his mind naturally give to his religious experience an unbroken character, and in the face and words of the youth we mark the same features and tones which grew and deepened as age advanced. We have often wished to have had such a revelation of his mind in this matter as the letters of Cromwell and the “Grace Abounding” of Bunyan give of theirs. Enough, however, escapes him to show that it partook as much of the old prophet as the Gospel evangelist. There were many things beside native cast of mind to produce this effect. It was an age of Hebrew sternness, and Milton was becoming more and more Puritan as the opposite party were pushing matters to extremes. This was the period of ship money and soap monopolies in the state—and of altars in the east end of churches, and of charging all clergymen to have in good repair and order “four surplices at All-hallowtide.” Not

many years before, the pilgrim fathers had set sail in the little *Mayflower* and found a home for Puritanism in New England. Still neither Charles nor Laud would take warning.

These things were, of course, known and talked of in Cambridge. Two young men were there who looked at things differently, and who, in after years, became the greatest writers on either side. These were Jeremy Taylor and Milton. In colleges close to each other they were studying—Jeremy Taylor having entered the university a year after Milton. Both were wonderful men and had strange vicissitudes. But in this, apart from other things, they were different—Taylor was one of those studious, imaginative men who are content with their dreams and their folios, and surround themselves with a world of their own—letting the actual world drift on as it best may—Milton was all this and more; he had his imagination and love of study in chains to his will; and while he wrote books to be read, he did actions to be written.

Had it not been for the petty posture-master Puseyism of Laud; his canons about vestments, and kneelings, and turnings to the east; binding them as eternal truths upon the consciences of all who entered the Church, Milton would, according to his father's desire and his own resolutions, have taken orders; but he declined doing so, for, as he says, "perceiving that tyranny had invaded the Church, that he that would take orders must write slave and take an oath withal, which, unless he took with a conscience that could retch, he must either straight perjure or split his faith—I thought it better to prefer a blameless silence before the sacred office of speaking bought and begun with

servitude and forswearing." Nor did "the insipid clamours of the bar," as he calls them, nor "the beaten path which leads right on to opulence" please his mind, which had by this time felt the stirrings of a higher duty and usefulness. In this state of feeling Milton took his degrees, and, esteemed by all, left a university which, like many of its best sons, he had never loved.

Many years after a young student from the vale of Esthwaite visited the room known as Milton's study, and, standing there, his image, as he walked among men in his glorious golden dawn, grew up in distinctness before him. Young Wordsworth, afterwards so like him in the purity and wisdom of his genius, and the noble self-reliance of his character, thus speaks of young Milton:—

"Yea our blind poet, who in his later day  
Stood almost single ; uttering odious truth—  
Darkness before and danger's voice behind,  
Soul awful—if the earth has ever lodg'd  
An awful soul—I seemed to see him here  
Familiarly, and in his scholar's dress  
Bounding before me yet a stripling youth—  
A boy, no better ; with his rosy cheeks  
Angelical, keen eye, courageous look,  
And conscious step of purity and pride."

By this time Milton's father had attained independence, and lived in his own country house at Horton, in Buckinghamshire ; and here Milton spent five of perhaps the happiest years in his life. He continued to add to his former acquirements ; pursuing wide and various studies in history, poetry, and philosophy. A certain sonnet to his friend Charles Deodati speaks in a

style we are not accustomed to associate with Miltonic sublimity :—

“I who once assumed a scornful air  
And scorned at love, am fallen in his snare :  
(Full many an upright man has fallen so ;)   
Yet think me not thus dazzled by the flow  
Of golden locks, a damask cheek, more rare  
The heart-felt beauties of my foreign fair,  
A mien angelic, with dark brows that show  
The tranquil lustre of a lofty mind.”

And so on he writes in a way that proves to every judicious person that Milton was by this time decidedly in love. Other visions, however, began to haunt his mind. That unshaken consciousness of his great genius and destiny that made him afterwards “bate not a jot of heart and hope, but ever bear up and steer right onward,” began to manifest itself to him as he took the measure of his powers and studied the plan of his future doings. As he himself says, “by sundry masters and teachers it was found that whatever he wrote, the style, by certain vital signs it had, was likely to live.” And therefore, in answer to a friend who charged him with indolence and indifference in his retreat, he describes himself as “not taking thought of being late, so it gave advantage to be more fit; for those that were latest lost nothing when the master of the vineyard came to give each one his hire.” Moreover he knew that poetry was, in its highest sense and achievements, no mere amusement, but the greatest truths clothed in the most ethereal beauty, and set to the divinest music; and therefore he tried so to live as one who knew and declared that he who would write a heroic poem, must first make his own life heroic.

With these noble dreams and purposes he lived during those years, from twenty-three to twenty-eight, when most men have entered into the heat and burthen of the day. Keeping back from his grand design, he threw off, as preparatory exercises, those youthful poems which breathe the very spirit of an English country life, and indicate a mind studious of every feature of delight in nature, and rising to lofty and musical thoughts. These poems are the well-known *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, *Comus* and *Lycidas*. In *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, we have the play of Milton's genius in his morning and evening walks around Horton. They manifest what never fails in the poet, acquaintance and sympathy with nature in all her moods and objects, but as yet we have few traces of the finer spiritual light and relationships in which the highest poetry beholds them. Milton was evidently more the thoughtful than the cheerful man. How touching is his last wish. His weary age indeed attained a peaceful hermitage, more solitary and silent than he had imagined, a hermitage of melancholy darkness, but there also his prayer was more than answered.

"Till old experience do attain  
To something like prophetic strain."

His next poem, *Comus*, is of a higher order. It abounds not only in clear pictures, dancing epithets, and graceful mirth and melancholy, such as fill up the two former pieces; it is full of a sweet and pure wisdom that might have dropped from the lips of Plato, of refined sentiments breathing the aspirations of un-earthly beings, and these embodied in

“Such sights as youthful poets dream  
On summer eves by haunted stream,”

and uttered in cadences so richly musical, that they

“take the prison’d soul,  
And lap it in Elysium.”

Comus, indeed, is one of the most perfect poems in the English or any other language.

In his *Lycidas*, written in 1637, he mourned for the death of a young friend, and also the thickening evils of his country; and in the same year, after suffering truer sorrow for the loss of his mother, he left England and travelled during the next fifteen months on the Continent.

Never did any man set out on his travels better prepared to enjoy and to be improved by all he saw. His was the learned eye, the buoyant enthusiasm, the soul capacious and susceptible of every sublime and beautiful association and image. To see nature on its grandest scale, and to tread the dust that stirred beneath with its thousand venerable and heroic remembrances, was all congenial to the mind of the young Englishman. Accustomed heretofore to the quiet pastoral scenes of Buckinghamshire, he now passed along the shores of the broad and blue waters of the Lake of Geneva, calm and rippling at the foot of the immense ranges of the Alps. He saw the sun shining upon the glorious Gulf of Genoa, and the fair Italy, the land of history and poetry, stretching out before his eager gaze. Every footstep awakened every power within him. Venice, strange and faëry, like one of his dreams, carried his mind onward to the indefinite and imaginative regions of the East. In Ferrara

he would stand in the dungeon of Tasso, and wonder how the bright realms of chivalry entered within its grated door; nor would he leave unvisited the home of Tasso's great rival, Ariosto. As he descended the hill into Florence, the dead Dante and the living Galileo would rise up before his mind, emulous of all great spirits. I can imagine him sitting on the Stone of the great bard of Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise, and musing on his wonderful history, as rich in patriotic as in poetic recollections, and sadly moving, because of his long exile and poverty, his banishment and burial far from the Florence he loved so well. But the visit he paid to Galileo, blind and prisoned, is a great historical picture. England has done nobly, in sending men of honour and worth to visit, in their chains, the humble confessors for Christ, the Madias,—as noble in the sight of God and true-hearted men as the great astronomer,—and the time will come when the dungeon of the martyrs of the Gospel will darken all Europe, and Rome itself, with as deep a shame and indignation as the dungeon of the martyr of science does at this hour. There Milton stood before Galileo—he who was in after years himself to widen the thoughts and liberties of men—a greater work than to discover new firmaments—and, like the great Italian, to close his days in darkness. At length he stood amidst the majestic ruins and remembrances of Rome,—republican, imperial, Christian, and papal Rome. He made a first and then a second visit, and spent, during both, four months. To Milton these months must have been worth as many years. The hourly sight of the Capitol—frequent wanderings in the Forum, where the eye saw only broken columns by day and

among these at night, instead of the ten thousands of old Rome, the sheep and the oxen,—but where an imagination like Milton's would hear the swell of Cicero's eloquence, as it wielded the fierce democracy; and the faint rebuke of Cæsar, as he was struck down by the wounds of his friend; and, farther off, the wild tumult of the Colosseum looking down upon the Christians struggling with the lions; solitary walks there at twilight, when the sun shed over the mouldering ruins its softening and mournful touches of dim beauty; or at moonlight, when the owl, hooting from the halls of Augustus, gave voice to the solemn hush of the great amphitheatre,—these sights, and sounds, and influences, must have flooded over his soul and raised it to a sublimity, beauty, wonder, and pathos, unknown before. But we must pause in this rich train of thought, and ask, what Italy did for Milton?

We think it was of infinite advantage to him as a poet. Its deep blue skies; its golden air; the melancholy beauty of its twilight hours; the solemn clearness of its starry nights, dropping down so near to the earth; the soul-like music of its churches, and the breathing pictures and statues of its galleries; the ruins that at every step rose up before his eye—landmarks of a history which was the history of the world, whether as pagan or Christian, and tombstones of a mighty buried past; the very dust, quick with the memories of all that touches, ennobles, and instructs, these, and more than these, could not stand round the eye and ear and soul of Milton without informing every sense, and feeding and purifying the master faculty of imagination within him.

Italy too was the land of genius. Not to speak of

the old minds ; to walk as he did where Dante mused, and to speak with men who had daily seen Tasso face to face, must have raised hope and courage within him. The genius of Michael Angelo looked down upon him from the dome of St. Peter's, that he had heaved into the sky, and the ethereal paradise-like spirit of Raffaello still lived in the "Transfiguration" of the Vatican, the last work of his genius ere he dropped his pencil for ever. What a book was Italy to Milton, and he read it well. I can scarcely think we should have had the fourth book of *Paradise Lost* had he not been there.

But not as a poet only, as a patriot also his visit was of immense service. Better the sweet enjoyment of living freedom, better the long agony of fighting for it, than the sad remembrance of a freedom that has died. True poetry must breathe the air of liberty ; like the eagle of the mountain it will die or droop if you cage up the soul of man. The civil despotism of all Italy, the combined civil and ecclesiastical slavery of Rome, made his heart burn within him. There were as many noble minds thirsting for liberty in Italy as there were in England, but they could not get it. And therefore Milton felt, better the rapture of the strife going on in old England, than the sickening breath of the death-like calm around.

And as a Puritan and Christian man he was confirmed. Though kindly treated by the Pope, he forgot, or rather broke through the advice of good Sir Henry Wotton on his leaving England, that a traveller should have "eyes open and mouth shut," for he publicly defended the Reformation and condemned Rome in Rome itself, and narrowly escaped the In-

quisition. Like Luther, I believe Milton would have lost ten thousand scudi rather than not have seen Rome. The Christianity that was torn to pieces in the Colosseum, and worshipped full of fear in the sand-holes of the catacombs—the Christianity of Paul, who stood of old asserting his civil rights and sacred convictions before the Emperor—this was far more congenial to our Milton than the Christianity of the Capitol and the Vatican, and of the gorgeous services of St. Peter's.

Such were his feelings at the time; and he says, "When I was preparing to pass over into Sicily and Greece, the melancholy intelligence which I received of the civil commotions in England made me alter my purpose, for I thought it base to be travelling for amusement abroad, while my fellow-citizens were fighting for liberty at home."

Hearing the signal sound from afar, it summoned him as with trumpet call to its help. For the history of England had been as rich in great events as that of Milton during these last eight years. Tyranny in Church and State, the one presiding in the High Commission Court, the other in the equally infamous and un-English Star Chamber, had been sorely trying the patience of a generous nation; but this patience was soon coming to an end, and giving way to individual and then to national resistance. People could stand by no longer and see a man like Dr. Alexander Leighton whipped, pilloried, branded, the half of his nose slit up, and committed to prison for life, merely because he censured Episcopacy and called for the abolition of the hierarchy. It was a very bad argument to answer Prynne's *Book against Plays*, in which

he censured the King and the prelacy, as well he might, by paring off his ears to the stumps, degrading him from all his honours, and putting him in prison for life. Dr. Bastwick had written a book in which he denied the divine right of the order of bishops above presbyters. The knife, the saw, and the branding-iron were applied to his ears. A bunch of flowers was given to him, and a bee settled on it. "Do you not see this poor bee?" he said. "She hath found out this very place to suck sweet flowers, and cannot I suck sweetness in this very place from Christ?" Burton preached two sermons against Laud's innovations, and suffered the same punishment. Fainting with heat and pain, he cried out, "'Tis too hot to last." All religious and thinking men felt the iron going into their souls, and that it was now too hot to last. When Englishmen saw the best of the clergy ejected by Laud, and many of the best of their countrymen leaving the graves and hearths of their fathers for the wild western wilderness, they could not but resolve that religion should be set free from such encroachments.

So it was in the Church. In the State matters were driving on at the same speed and in the same direction. The King imposed, without consent of Parliament, a tax called Ship Money. John Hampden refused to pay it, though he was charged twenty shillings only. A white surplice is a trifle, and so are twenty shillings; but if wearing the one and paying the other be taken as an acknowledgment of the submission of the Christian conscience and the civil independence to unscriptural or unconstitutional authority, you may do so at the expense of all religious and manly freedom. Thermopylæ was but a worthless rocky pass, Bannockburn but a

waste swamp ; but if either had been yielded, Greece and Scotland had been lost. Hampden's twenty shillings brought out the principle all the more that England only can tax England, and no man, not even the king, dare touch the smallest pin-point of my property. John Hampden, by a venal decision of the judges, had to pay the money, but Charles lost the lingering attachment of the people. Things were come to that state when the moving of a finger only is needed. This was done speedily. In 1638 Charles attempted, at Laud's instigation, to impose upon Scotch Presbyterianism a prayer-book more Romish than the English one. Jenny Geddes flung her stool at the dean as he read the collect in St. Giles' Church, Edinburgh ; and, as by an electric shock, the nation was roused. Charles attacked Scotland, and was defeated. The Scotch marched into England, and so strong had the English feeling become that every old hostility was forgotten, and England joined in opposition to royalty and prelacy.

Such was the state of matters when Milton set foot in England once more, and here we close the first part of his life.

II.—The second part, upon which we now enter, ranges from 1639 to 1657, from his return from his travels to his retirement from the Latin Secretaryship under the Commonwealth ; and this again is plainly divisible into two parts—the first a time of fierce conflict with tongue, and pen, and sword, till the execution of Charles ; the second a time of comparative peace, to the close of Cromwell's protectorate.

Milton now stood, in his thirty-first year, upon the threshold of his public life. As he himself says of

Cromwell, "He had grown up in peace and privacy at home, silently cherishing in his heart a confidence in God, and a magnanimity well adapted for solemn times that were approaching." The natural seriousness of his mind had, from study of great books, and especially study of the great times in which his lot was cast, risen to a certain loftiness of temper and aims. The passion for that liberty which he reckoned the image of God in man had grown into a calm and settled principle, confirmed by the maturity of his wisdom, and ennobled by the powers of his imagination.

Two paths lay before him—to devote himself to the building up of that great poem, towards which everything he read, saw, felt, thought, had been gathering as to a centre; or to leave "the shady spaces of philosophy" and poetry, it might be for ever, and give himself to the present needs of religion and liberty in his country; "to interrupt," as he himself says, "the pursuits of his hopes, and to leave a calm, pleasing solitariness, fed with cheerful and confident thoughts, to embark on a troubled sea of noises and hoarse disputes, from beholding the bright countenance of truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies."

In a magnificent passage of one of his prose writings, which are so full of fine snatches of autobiography, he speaks of his early conceived and passionately cherished desire to write a book which "the world would not willingly let die," a book that would "inbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue and public civility; allay the perturbations of the mind, and set the affections in right tune;" and a book written in the mother dialect of England that would do for his country what the greatest and choicest wits of Athens, Rome,

or modern Italy, and those Hebrews of old, did for theirs. For this purpose he had surveyed the powers and acquirements of his mind, and anxiously weighed the various forms of poetry, epic, and drama, pastoral ode and hymn; had mused over the achievements of King Arthur as a fit subject for a British epos, and had actually, as may be seen at this day, in MSS., at Cambridge, drawn out the sketch of a tragedy on Adam in Paradise.

Now, however, he saw, as he looked at his country, that the heroic life must be led before the heroic poem could be written, and so, keeping it, however, in full view through the tumults of the times, he laid aside his singing robes and went to play his part like a man in the struggle.

He gave up the flower and fruit and summer of his manhood, and for the next twenty years, nearly, whatever may have been the visitations of the Divine muse, nothing but a few brief, bare, unadorned sonnets escaped from that mind which afterwards flooded the world with its lofty melody, and created Hell, Paradise, and Heaven.

I cannot help looking at this decision, at the mid-time of his life, as one of the noblest homages ever made to the cause of God and humanity. Not indeed, that Puritanism and poetry are, as many insinuate and affirm, opposed to each other. Men who think thus, must have a very poor idea of either; as if Puritanism were shortening the hair and lengthening the face, abstaining from plum pudding on Christmas Day, and affecting a peaked or a shovelled hat all the year round; or as if poetry were the tricking out in rhymes pretty conceits, and gilding over ugly vices. No, Puritanism and poetry, in their true sense—the one religion in the

heart and the other religion in the imagination—are as soul and body. Woe to that literature where they are severed; but well is it for that time when, as in Milton, the pure sentiments of Christian piety are one with the intrepid feelings of human freedom, and both are ministered to and heightened by genius and taste. Let us here quote, before proceeding to Milton's ecclesiastical and political writings, a passage that will show what he felt, and at the same time, of what eloquent prose he was master.

“Neither do I think it shame to covenant with any knowing reader, that I may for some years go on trust with him toward the payment of what I am now indebted, as being a work not to be raised from the heat of youth or the vapours of wine, like that which flows at waste from the pen of some vulgar amourist, or the trencher fury of a rhyming parasite, nor yet to be attained by the invocation of dame memory and her siren daughters, but by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases: to this must be added industrious and select reading, steady observation, insight into all seemly and generous arts and affairs; till which in some measure be compassed at mine own peril and cost, I refuse not to sustain this expectation from as many as are not loth to hazard so much credulity upon the best pledges that I can give them.”

Milton meanwhile took up his abode at Aldersgate Street, in a humble house, with a small garden, “the Muses’ bower,” as he called it; and not far off, at Westminster, the Long Parliament began its sittings

on the 3rd of November 1640. It was at its commencement the greatest Parliament England ever saw. It met after an interval of eleven long years, and was determined that England should not be degraded by civil and ecclesiastical tyranny to the state of Spain and Italy. We owe almost everything we have as a free nation to the determined stand of the patriots who composed it. It went right to work at once. It chose a speaker who was not the nominee of the King; it ordered its speeches to be published, a thing which had never been done before; it restored the silenced ministers; brought Prynne, Bastwick, and Burton out of prison in triumph; it abolished the infamous High Commission and Star Chamber; it attacked the bishops, sent them from their seats in the Lords to their flocks and their dioceses; and it impeached Strafford and Laud, the chief conspirators against the liberties of the State and the Church. The eyes of the nation were upon their Parliament; all minds were agitating the questions of the day, and the main question was—What is to be done with the bishops? As Butler, in his *Hudibras*, says—

“The oyster women locked their fish up,  
And trudg’d away, to cry, ‘No bishop;’  
Botchers left old clothes in the lurch,  
And left to turn and patch the Church.”

Milton at this season wrote his first controversial work; it was entitled “Of Reformation in England and the Causes that hitherto have hindered it, in two books.” In the first book he asserts the imperfection of the Reformation, as carried out in England, when compared with the New Testament and the primitive Church,

and points out two principal causes of this, in the retention of popish ceremonies, and the confiding to diocesan bishops illegitimate powers from which the people were excluded. In the second book he shows the political aspect of prelacy as always opposed to liberty, and not necessarily friendly to royalty, but simply, as proved by history, only when it suited its purpose. In two other treatises he entered into direct controversy with the excellent Archbishop Usher and the genial Bishop Hall, and defended both himself and five Presbyterian ministers, whose work—called “*Smectymnuus*,” a word formed from the initials of their names—these Episcopalian writers had attacked.

However unsparing in his invective Milton was, these writings—and he wrote and published five in one year—prove that whatever might be the temporary and personal disputes around him, his great aim was to bring back the Church, and with it the State which it misled and fondled in its worst pretensions, to the simplicity of the Gospel; and to assert, against all arbitrary measures, the right of every man to exercise free speech and thought. The prelacy of these times offended Milton’s ideas of the unassuming character of that dispensation whose Author came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; whose spiritual genius was opposed to pomp and ceremony; and whose means and ends forbade the adoption of any coercion, as hurtful alike to the Gospel and the State. In fact, it was not an episcopacy alone, but an established sect, that Milton opposed, as either making the State an instrument of oppression in the hands of the dominant party, or making the Church a vassal to do the meanest work of the State. Thus, he thought, religion would flourish

in the purity of its principles and the affections of its children ; and the sword of persecution, whether with its blunted edge of an insulting toleration, that cannot allow Dissenters to be married but the State functionary must look on, as upon criminals or children, or to be buried in parish churchyards without a priest and a service they disallow ; or its sharp, thirsty edge of bloodshed, so eager, when it can, to creep out of its scabbard and put an end to the heretic, when it cannot so easily put an end to the heresy : this sword would be most effectually deprived of all power by being not only sheathed, but cast away.

And Milton was wise in his judgment, for the holding of the opposite principle involved all parties in that age in inextricable sins and errors. It is easy for the persecuted to see the beauty, reasonableness, and divine authority of freedom of conscience and worship. No man talked more liberally than James II. did, when he was a subject and persecuted, about the absurdity of visiting speculations with penalties which should be reserved for acts, and of refusing the services of a man as a soldier, seaman, or lawyer, because he believed in seven sacraments and transubstantiation ; and yet no man more bitterly persecuted in turn the Puritans and the Covenanters. Jeremy Taylor published, in 1647, his celebrated "Liberty of Prophesying," wherein he advocates the right of all men to adopt and avow their religious opinions. He was then wandering, a chaplain and a schoolmaster, among the Welsh plains and hills ; but when, thirteen years after, he became Bishop of Down and Connor, in Ireland, he did not protest, though no man had a lovelier and milder spirit, against those acts that sent

thousands of faithful men adrift to beg and starve and die. The pilgrim fathers—men who had been brought up in the independency of John Robinson, and had been driven to Boston and Salem because of their determination to think and act according to conscience—enacted cruel laws, and put Quakers, two of their pious women, to death, and for no cause but that of their religion. It was a common error, and led to common crimes; and we shall be short-sighted indeed if we do not see the root of the evil. But it was in vain. “It is glorious,” as has been well said, “to see how nature triumphs over art. The artificial religion of creeds and rituals withers in the hands of the most absolute monarchy and the most subtle priesthood, while the simple practice of piety and virtue lives with the poor through successive generations. Penal statutes to repress it resemble penal statutes to cleanse the world of violets. Fashion may banish them from the burgomaster’s garden, but the heavens will conspire to nourish them in the shade of a nettle, or at the foot of an oak.”

In the midst of these controversies, in 1643, Milton married Mary Powell, the daughter of a Royalist cavalier. As all the world knows, this was the first great misfortune of his life. “It was struck up,” says an old biographer, “in great haste.” He seems to have wedded a fine face and figure, and not a tender and kindred soul. In a month his household gods were shattered; and, high spirited and dreaming of complete happiness, he was disappointed with his choice, and insulted by her departure. Let us not, however, be unjust or ungenerous to the lady. It was not her fault if she could not appreciate the stately and some-

what severe schoolmaster—and Milton doubtless carried out more literally than is perhaps agreeable to ladies the sense of that encomium of Sarah, whose great virtue, as the marriage service duly and carefully reminds them on entering into the honourable estate, consisted in calling her husband lord and master. Other things interposed and envenomed the original causes. Mrs. Milton stayed away at her Royalist father's, in Shotover, and was as indifferent to Milton then as Lady Byron was in later times to her husband. Milton wrote his books on the Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce, in which he asserts and argues that uncongeniality is cause sufficient for dissolving the marriage bond. It was an unfortunate controversy. It set Milton wrong with his best affections, and gave a sternness to his natural seriousness, drying up what—to a man of poetic mind, however self-reliant—is the well-spring of the greatest earthly happiness, the love and sympathy of her he has taken to his bosom. It set him wrong with the religious parties at that time, classing him overmuch with men of wild and eccentric notions; and it has placed him in a disadvantageous light before posterity, as a man overbearing at home, and of dangerous opinions in the most important of social questions; whilst, in reality, his waiting in England till his mother died—his tender care of his father, whom he took under his roof and cherished till his end—his generous forgiveness of his wife, and protection and hospitality to her friends in the days of their reverses—all prove that whatever may be the tone of his public conduct, the high heart of the man bled inwardly in its disappointment and desolation.

Milton, however, continued his charge of the young men he educated, and the cause of liberty to which he had devoted himself. His celebrated "Tractate on Education" is an outline of the manner in which he trained his scholars. It, in common with Locke's treatise on the same subject, has formed the centre of the many controversies in regard to the classical teaching of our public schools. Let any young man read the little book, and he will find a ground-plan of study that may stimulate, as well as humble him, by making him aware what Milton meant by that "complete and generous education which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously, all the offices, both public and private, of peace and war."

In the same year, 1645, Milton published his great oration entitled *Areopagitica*, a speech for the liberty of unlicensed printing. He was by this time alienated from the dominant Presbyterian party, because of their opposition to his doctrine of divorce; and they gave him still further cause by attempting to restrict the liberty of open speech, and with it, of the press. They did so not because they were Presbyterian, but because they were powerful; because they had not, as yet, unlearned all the lessons of Rome, or any of their predilections for the interference of the State with private judgment and conscience. They did what Episcopacy had done before in England, and what Independency was doing at that moment in America, in a worse form; and no party that has the power, will ever cease, altogether, and of their own accord, to act in the same way, unless they all learn the common lesson, that magistrates can coerce, and by bolts confine bodies, but neither can coerce nor confine souls.

This speech of Milton, the object of Edmund Burke's praise and imitation, is his best prose work. No one can rise from its perusal without feeling proud of that English language, which is, at this hour, the only tongue that speaks the thoughts of independent men, and that English mind which has settled for ever the great principles which, the more they prevail, make a nation prosperous and happy, because free.

Public matters were now hastening swiftly on to their results, and becoming more and more perplexed. The fields of Edgehill, Newbury, Marston Moor, and, at last, Naseby, had been fought and won. Many of the chief actors in the former scenes of the great drama had been swept away. Strafford and Laud lost their heads on Tower Hill. John Hampden was seen late in the afternoon of a June day, in 1643, coming out of the skirmish at Chalgrove, faint and wounded, and three weeks after he died, leaving a name of unspotted patriotism, and regrets that, in the stormy time that was lowering, his clear head, warm heart, and firm hand, were mouldering in the quiet grave. Falkland, the best of the Cavaliers, was struck down at Newbury. The Royalist cause was thoroughly broken; the Presbyterian power of Parliament threatened by the Independent power of the army; and henceforth the two great historical figures are Charles and Cromwell, the one seen amidst the darkness of death, the other amidst the blaze of victory.

Such was the close of the career of Charles. He did not see that for every inch he raised his throne above mercy and justice, he was raising his scaffold at an equal rate. Let us sympathise with the reverses of the monarch, and the noble bearing, in the last

terrible hour, of the man. But let us pause before we speak of the "blessed martyr." Most men reckon his execution a great blunder, and many a great crime. Very likely it was a blunder, for his son still lived, and the scaffold of a king stirs a nation's heart to its depths. And yet it told then, and tells to this day. It was like the burning of the Pope's bull by Luther. That axe stroke rung through the world the warning that kings had better take care what they do; and that the wrath of an oppressed people, when its blood is up, may sweep them away too; and it stands in English history to teach every future governor that his throne, and perhaps his life, is safe only when the constitutional liberty of the nation is safe also. That it was a crime is a more serious question. If it was, then some other things were crimes. It was a crime to fight against Charles at Naseby,—to invite William of Orange over to England,—and to meet James II., the Lord's anointed, at the Boyne. The "glorious Revolution" was a crime. It was rebellion against a lawful king, and can be defended on this principle only—that rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God—that "we must prefer," as Milton said, "Queen Truth to King Charles;" that "it is not the glory of a Protestant State never to have put their king to death—it is the glory of a Protestant king never to have deserved death." Let those, then, who shout, "King William and the Protestant religion!" ask themselves if they are not in substance shouting, "King Charles and the scaffold on Tower Hill!" Let those who approve of the reward offered for the head of the Pretender, in 1745, see that they are right in abhorring the taking off the head of his great-grandfather in 1649.

In fact, you must choose between the abstract doctrine of its being sin in any case to oppose a king; and that of its being right to oppose him to the death if need be. If you choose the former, you condemn not the regicides only, but the Covenanters; the friends of King William; and all the efforts for liberty, in Hungary and Italy, at the present hour. If you choose the latter, you adopt Milton's sentiment, "If I blame tyrants, what does that concern kings?" and must limit your objections to the execution of Charles to matters subordinate and technical.

Upon these and other grounds, Milton defended this great historical event in several writings of distinguished power and eloquence. The main principle of these is adopted now by all parties—the indefeasible right of the people to protect their liberty against oppression. Let us thank God that the habits of our times can carry out this principle in milder forms than they did or were able to do in the seventeenth century, and let us not forget that, perhaps, after all, there was no other path but a rough and a stern one for our forefathers.

During the next half of the second period of Milton's life—from 1649 to 1658—he was Foreign Latin Secretary in the executive government under the republic. Whatever might be the administrative genius of Oliver Cromwell, it is to be remembered that at this time of England's highest greatness among European powers, John Milton forged the thunderbolts which the Protector launched. To him also is owing, in some measure, that eminently Protestant character of our country's councils, in which the weight of England was added to the power of Gustavus of

Sweden, and the voice of her mercy reached the ear and heart of Christendom in behalf of the persecuted Waldenses. They were both great and kingly men; they have both been grievously misrepresented. Cromwell must often have been an interesting study to Milton, whose universal sympathies could reach to a mind so different from his own in its want of speculation and poetry, but excelling him in that other genius which consists in intuitive sagacity, and equalling him in commanding will, invincible courage, a richness and strength of character formed amidst the spiritual conflicts of St. Ives, the fearful issues of Naseby and Worcester, and the tumultuous discords of civil parties around him. Were anything else wanting to set right the brave Lord Protector, besides his touching letters of piety to his wife and children, and the magnificent story of his country during his power, that is supplied by the eulogies of a man like Milton, who is eminently sparing in his praise. Why give him a monument so long as England lasts? As on Sir Christopher Wren's grave in St. Paul's let us write on Cromwell's memory, "If you seek a monument, look around."

III. But let us hasten to the last and most interesting portion of his life, that included within 1658 and 1674. He had lost his sight altogether in 1652, and remained in darkness during the next twenty-two years. When Charles II. was restored his works were burned by the common hangman, and he himself was narrowly searched for, and, had he been found, his head would have rolled from the scaffold. The great work of his life, however, was yet to do, and he could not die.

Then he set himself to that poem which had filled

the dreams of his youth and the meditations of his manhood, and which now came back in his nightly inspirations to be crowned and transfigured by the revelations of his old age. Nothing could crush his dauntless spirit, or quench the heavenly fire that burned within him. The extremity of poverty, the darkness amidst the blaze of day, the lonely hearth, the indifference of children, the price set on his head, the hourly fear of the assassin, the calumnies that defiled his character and the misfortunes that degraded his country, infirmities of body and advance of years; in the midst of all this chaos rose up the glorious creation of *Paradise Lost*. Written within the space of five years, as is generally supposed, and published in 1667, it contains the sap and fruit of fifty years' growth, and that going on in a mind as original, capacious, and susceptible as ever belonged to any of the sons of men. Milton's prime gift was his imperial imagination, that "vision and faculty divine;" that something God-like that all men feel, when it meets them, and acknowledge to be of heaven. Whatever powers Milton had, all subserved this perception of, and complacency in, a diviner harmony, beauty, and greatness; a purer delight, and serener truth than sense or reason know. Hence his whole being was poetry; the sense of that subtle and wonderful relationship of the soul within, and the world without; by which the one clothes its thoughts in all that is most tender, sublime, and harmonious in sight or sound, and the other has given to it, by the vivifying imagination, a finer substance, a more spirit-like light, and a purer melody.

These are the sources of all that is great and beauti-

ful. Love and joy in the soul are themselves reflected in the sparkle of the sea, the voice of children, the smile of flowers; and a still forest depth, a far off mountain height, a vast immeasurable desert of sand, or a vaster, more immeasurable firmament of stars, the wail of the blast as it storms across the yielding mass of pines,—these call up, nourish, and give body to the loftiness, and silence, and strange infinitude of the world of thought and feeling within the soul.

No man had ever a livelier sympathy with the vast, whether in the sweep of firmaments or of thoughts, than Milton. His mind was like his own Paradise, where

“Over head up-grew,  
Insuperable height of loftiest shade,  
Cedar and pine, and fir and branching palm.”

The grasp and intuitive directness of his understanding is second only to the power of his imagination. It possessed somewhat of the same “regal port;” exhibiting masses of moral truth with an argumentative greatness, and beings of immense powers and passions, with a depth and correctness, that make us feel how fitly it was mated to the master-faculty. And, combined with the massive intellectual nature of his thoughts, is to be added their habitual moral and religious character.

Such were his three great faculties—imagination, intellect, conscience; and these were like the cloud of Wordsworth,

“Which moveth altogether, if it move at all;”

or as he himself says of the angels, so it might be said of them,

“In mighty quadrate join'd,  
Of union irresistible, moved on  
In silence their bright legions to the sound  
Of instrumental harmony.”

“To such height of God-like power” was his whole mind elevated, and the result was the embodiment, by means of its complete action, of what is greatest and sweetest in the human soul, and in divine things, in forms that, were they become visible, they might most worthily assume.

But there are two other things to be added to these natural gifts. There was the immensely rich memory of the poet; rich in knowledge of books, scenes, and men. It was no desert land over which his imagination reigned. Every period of his life had added some needed part to the huge store. Public life had taught him the secrets of the human heart on a grand and extended scale; foreign climes had engraven pictures in undying lines upon his memory, that afterwards they might feed fancy and be hung up in the great temple of his genius; and books had brought wisdom and knowledge to him from all times and countries. “Then,” as has been touchingly said by Hallam, “the remembrance of early reading came over his dark and lonely path like the moon emerging from the clouds. Then it was that the muse was truly his, not only as she poured her creative inspiration into his mind, but as the daughter of memory, coming with fragments of ancient melodies, the voice of Euripides, and Homer, and Tasso, sounds that he loved in youth and treasured up for the solace of old age.” These and more than these he had collected around him; and *Paradise Lost* was like a lake into which all flowed; calm, lonely,

and broad ; at one time shaded by the gigantic gloom of hell ; at another brightened by the fresh beauty of paradise ; and once again lost amidst the seven-fold splendours of heaven.

The other endowment was the fine eye and ear of Milton. He had a painter's eye and a musician's ear. The first had been quenched in night, but it had worked well when it was day ; and nothing can excel the exquisite delicacy of the latter. The Miltonic pause, and cadence and swell of harmony, lifting the soul to the gates of heaven, might have been copied from some wandering melody that had escaped the upper spheres.

Such were his gifts and acquirements, as they stand out in the marvellous subject, treatment, and style of *Paradise Lost*.

Nor must we forget the circumstances in which Milton was placed. Whatever his poem may have lost from his blindness, in his inability to write it down when he desired, to consult books, to look abroad upon nature, still it owed much to it also. Songs in the night rise to a sublimer and more pathetic strain than songs of the day, and Milton himself speaks of

“ The solemn nightingale who ne'er  
Ceased warbling, but all night tun'd her soft lays.”

and expressly of himself thus—

“ As the wakeful bird  
Sings darkling, and, in shadiest covert hid,  
Tunes her nocturnal note.”

The darkness laid bare to him firmaments of glory and immensity ; brought out in tenderer and more pathetic light the bright scenes he had beheld of old, and made

him yearn over them with a love that we cherish only for the lost. It drew his whole soul back upon itself, till, in the clouded solitude, his thoughts became objects of sight, and stood forth as in sculptured forms; and then his ear became more quick to every modulation, and dwelt for its delight upon every cadence, till "his thoughts voluntary moved harmonious numbers."

Two years after Milton's death Bunyan wrote his *Pilgrim's Progress*. We owe, I doubt not, much of its fond minuteness in describing every footstep of the pilgrim—the freshness of its valley of humiliation and the clear shining of the prospect from its delectable mountains, the sombre darkness of the river of death, and the transparent glories and triumphant songs of its New Jerusalem—to the chains and walls and dreariness of twelve years in Bedford Jail. No other of Bunyan's works has these features in the same degree; they are the fruits of the passionate yearnings of his soul over "the bright and breathing world," as it called up the past and the absent, and invested them with the tender and sublime lights of genius and of grief. Thus the passion and power, as well as piety, of John Bunyan were purified and transfigured; and the fair earth, so refreshing to his bold, clear eye, grew fairer before the gaze of his fancy, as the far off heavens, with their tones of jubilee, and sweetness of repose, and overpowering glory, came down to meet the longings of his faith. *Pilgrim's Progress* was the child of both—an immortal child, humbler in form and feature than its great compeer, *Paradise Lost*, but living for ever in the heart and home of infancy and old age, while its elder brother dwells solitary, as in some remote and silent sanctuary. As it was with Bunyan, the greatest

irregularly educated genius of the time, so it was with Milton, who added to his superiority over Bunyan in genius all that he wanted in learning and culture. Prisoned in the darkened chamber of his soul, the contrasts of extreme gloom and light come out before him, and, amidst these primal elements, he conjured up his hell and his heaven. At the same time all the reminiscences of scenes of beauty and luxuriance, seen years before, revived as his fancy and feeling brooded over them, till, purified under the influence of his pensive and elevated spirit, they grouped themselves together in the description of Paradise.

Let us add also to his blindness the misfortunes that clung around his old age. As the tide of youthful hopes and manhood's cares sank down, up rose the "broad bare backs" of his lofty thoughts, and when it passed away altogether the precious treasures lying in the depths of his mind were laid open. Thus *Paradise Lost* grew up amidst poverty and persecution. England had been lost, and fame, and strength, and hope; and now the regret of the patriot rose into the divine sorrow and song of the Christian poet. Then also his will became purer and stronger than ever, and sustained his genius, as on eagle-wings, through its longest and loftiest flights. Like Samson carrying away the gates of Gaza, Milton walks erect under the weight of theme and thoughts that no man but himself has ever been able to bear for so long a time. He moves among the few but great elements out of which he had to make his poem with a firmness of step that amazes us as much almost as the invention with which he arranges, adorns, and shapes them forth.

The result of all these causes, then, was *Paradise*

Lost, the epic of the world, the greatest poem in the English, perhaps in any, language.

It would be in vain for me to enter into detail upon its subject, fable, action, character, sentiments, machinery, moral, diction, and versification ; nor can I enter upon the grateful task of pointing out its various qualities. Who that has read the first two books need be reminded of its sublimity ; farther than these the mind cannot go. The unrivalled beauty of the fourth book is universally admitted. The wonderful suggestiveness of the whole in calling up, by single lines and epithets, vivid trains of thought, and thus making every reader himself a poet, is equally well known ; and last, but chief, the one spirit that almost everywhere reigns through it of reverence, faith, purity, and adoration, makes it greater in its godliness than it is even in its genius. Its one great defect was perhaps inseparable from its peculiar excellence. It does not touch the springs of common sorrow and common joy. Milton was either unskilled in or disdained these sources of power over the popular heart. He speaks to us, or rather before us, like a younger brother of the archangel Raphael, to whom he seems more akin than to man. Yet what can equal those measured wails of sorrow, when, coming back to earth, he finds himself irrecoverably shut out from its face of light.

“ Thus with the year  
Seasons return ; but not to me returns  
Day or the sweet approach of eve or morn,  
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,  
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine,  
But cloud instead, and ever during dark  
Surrounds me ; from the cheerful ways of men  
Cut off.”

We must not linger upon the works of his last days. *Paradise Regained* is a moon-like reflection of the setting light of *Paradise Lost*. *Samson Agonistes*, his last poem, so different from the flush and flower of the early *Comus*, is an image of Milton's mind in its latest stage, and looks like the Torso of Michael Angelo, large and sinewy in its naked strength. His *Dictionary of the Latin Tongue*, his *History of England*, and his *System of Theology*, not to mention a *Grammar for Children*, and a *Treatise on Logic for Youth*, were the objects of his vast and varied toil.

And now, ere we leave him, let us glance at his character and daily habits. His character was composed of rich and rare elements, and in such a way that it can never for a moment be mistaken. It seems as if made on some disused type of being between angel and man. It stands aloof and rises aloft. His mind has always a solitude about it. It dwelt apart even amidst the dust of the earth in remote and silent regions of thought, and there, all that is lofty and lovely was familiar to it as the faces of home are to other men. And these made him serene in joy as in sorrow. He had meat to eat which the world knew not of. The light of the soul within destroyed the clouds of circumstance and change, or became brighter because of their presence. His courage was that of the old Roman senator and the middle-age knight, grafted upon the thoughtful and assured Christian. His was the fortitude that was strong to wait. He knew well that when the revels of Charles and Whitehall had gone out in blackness and shame, the calm, clear, remote star of his genius would still look down in its course upon the revering look of thousands, and

give guidance to unborn generations. And his was the fortitude to work, and so he toiled on till

“Th’ ascending pile  
Stood fixed her stately height.”

And he had in his heart the very essence of piety. He had, I doubt not, to struggle much with pride of spirit, and that occasioned some great errors in religious truth; but still he reposed on the atonement of that Saviour whom otherwise he sadly mistook. This was his express and deep-felt ground of hope before that God in whose sight even the mind of a Milton is small almost as that of a little child; and his heart is best laid open in the cry, “God, be merciful to me a sinner.” So at least, Milton himself, I am sure, was convinced in that experience of which he has said little, but of which his whole life tells enough.

And now that “mighty orb of song” was about to set. There he lived during the last twelve years of his life, in that small house, one room on each floor, in Artillery Walk, Bunhill Fields. He had lost his two wives, and had a third as his companion. He rises in the morning at four in summer and five in winter, and begins the day with his old Hebrew Bible; and for two hours meditates and prays. Then he sets himself to compose his great works, getting some stray hand of friend, or daughter, or wife, or boy, to write to his dictation. Had you gone at mid-day to see him, the sound of viol or organ would perchance have met your ear as you approached the house, for the old man solaced his toil by sacred song; or perhaps you might have looked on him, as clothed in a grey coarse cloth coat he sat at the door to enjoy the balmy

summer air ; and had you entered, you might have seen him, as one who visited him did, up one pair of stairs, in a chamber hung with rusty green, sitting in an elbow chair, dressed neatly in black, his dark grey eyes clear as if they still were full of light, his face pale and looking with an expression of pain from gout in his hands and fingers.

Such was the old man eloquent, who thus,

“ With the accustomed garb of daily life  
Puts on a lovely and a touching grace,  
Of more distinct humanity, that leaves  
All genuine admiration unimpaired.”

And now the time came when he should die. Years, and anxiety, and exhausting creative effort had done their work. On the 8th day of November, 1674, in his sixty-sixth year, he departed, so peacefully that the precise time was not known to those around.

It was on a Sabbath day that he entered into rest, and left the sadness and darkness of earth for the vision of God and the joy ineffable.

“ There entertain him, all the saints above,  
In solemn troops and sweet societies,  
That sing, and singing in their glory move,  
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.”

And now we stand and look upon that face, so beautiful in youth that he was called the lady of his college, so noble and touching in old age. In a moment all that clouded or brightened it passes before us. The quiet scenes of youthful Horton ; the mornings and evenings of Italy ; the troubled events of the Rebellion and the Commonwealth ; the figures of Hampden and Cromwell,—these have met it in times gone by ; and the enthusiasm and inspiration of genius, the dis-



## VII.

*ST. COLUMBA.*

ST. COLUMBA (for saint he is by Divine grace as well as by universal canonisation) is the first and only conspicuous figure in the beginning of the history of Scotland. One or two names, indeed, among the brave and good men who made Scotland what it is in its strange mixture of religious enthusiasm, persistent as the sternness of her primary granite, and passionate as the colours of her purple heather; names such as those of Ninian of Whithorn, in Galloway, and Palladius of Fordun, in the Mearns, still survive in popular tradition. These, however, gleam forth in the waste sea of distant and shadowy time—mere rocks above the surface—fragments of a past influence otherwise now submerged. Columba stands upon the horizon, clear and monumental, like some Ben Nevis or Ben Macdhui. And when all other history is dumb around this great and solitary “Highland Reaper” in a nobler harvest field, we feel as we still hear his tones, unsilenced after thirteen centuries, that Wordsworth’s lines are truer than in their original reference:—

“A voice so thrilling ne’er was heard  
In spring-time from the cuckoo bird,  
Breaking the silence of the seas,  
Among the farthest Hebrides.”

So Columba looks as he stands at the very gateway of our national history, and opens in Iona a course of heroic and heavenly deeds, worthily continued at Bannockburn and Drumclog.

It was in the year 521 that Columba (so called from his dove-like loving character and glancing eye) was born at Garton, in Donegal, Ireland. Ireland was then called Scotland, the land of the Scoti—descendants of the Sciute, the Scythians—or, as the word means, wanderers, who came of old from the Black Sea. Modern Scotland was then known as Albyn; and from Albyn, and in it, from Kilpatrick, on the banks of the Clyde, came the man St. Patrick, who Christianised the island we now know as Ireland. We claim him for Scotland and the Clyde from the consensus of the latest and best authorities, namely, Dr. Todd and the Rev. J. T. Shearman, in his newly published "*Loca Patriciana; or, Identification of Localities, chiefly in Leinster, visited by St. Patrick.*" Torn by Irish pirates from a Christian home at Kilpatrick, sold a slave in Ireland, converted on the hill of Sleamish as he herded his sheep and mused over the Christian lessons of his distant home—for so he tells us in "*Confessions*"—he became Apostle of Ireland, and within a hundred years Ireland earned the title of *Insula Sanctorum*, the Island of Saints. We would gladly linger on this great name, but we can do nothing more than mark his relations to Columba. Columba was the grandson of that Niel of the Nine Hostages who stole away Patrick from his Clyde home, an event which God used to the conversion of Patrick. And it was in one of the religious schools Patrick founded that Columba was trained

up to Christianity. The day that made Patrick an Irish slave, made Columba the Scottish Apostle. So close, after all, though so hidden from us, are the links God forges, that we may patiently and hopefully know that He is ever wielding the great hammer, and shaping the far-reaching chain.

Columba came of a royal family, and Conal, king of the northern Picts, was his kinsman. Patrick the slave has found a son and successor he dreamt not of in Columba the prince. The slavery of Patrick led to his Christian freedom—the high birth of Columba gave him a natural leadership over the Celtic heart. But above all, Columba came straight into the fervour of the first Christian era of Ireland. The men who knew Patrick, and may have seen him die in 493—only twenty-eight years before the birth of Columba—were the relations and teachers of Columba. The edge of first impressions was still unworn, the blossom and fruit of the new life still kept its tender bloom. Moreover, his social position, with its many advantages, gave him the unimpaired benefit of the new learning and religion.

The life of Columba, from his first passing out of boyhood at the age of sixteen, divides itself into two nearly equal portions of thirty years—the one spent in Ireland, the other in Scotland. There seems to have been unbroken growth in the first half of his life. There are the gentleness and purity of his boyhood, of which tradition speaks in mythical stories. Ere he was twenty-five years old he had founded many schools of learning and devotion, and, above all, one at Derry—the place of the oaks—which he loved best of all, and which is now the centre of ultra-Protestantism in

Ireland. A genuine Celt, he loved to wander on from scene to scene, and yet to have a home for his heart. Early poems, if not his to the letter, yet certainly his in spirit, are preserved, revealing his pensive and idealising mood. A lover of written records, specially the sacred and biblical, the Psalms of David were dear to him, with the fresh-springing songs of the Irish bards, wakened up by religion and patriotism. Celt and Christian have seldom been more finely united than in Columba. He had the marked qualities of the Gaelic as distinguished from the Cymric or Welsh Celt. Native devoutness, as ingrained melancholy, bold dash and *élan*, the same on the heights of Alma as amidst the storms of the Hebrides, as also the grander qualities of the Christian, modifying and transfiguring these natural gifts, the unquestioning faith, the fresh fervour, the unhesitating surrender to Christ, all these we see conspicuous in our first missionary. Looking at Columba as Celt and Christian, we cannot forget our latest and greatest missionary, Alexander Duff. Duff was born, as he himself wrote, "in the parish of Moulin, fairly within the Grampians," the very heart of the north Pictish race whom Columba visited and converted, so that Duff owes himself to Columba. "The fire, the glow of the missionary's genius," says his friend and biographer, "was Celtic by nature and by training." Moreover, it was from Ulva, seen near and daily by Columba from Iona, that the grandfather of David Livingstone came. Livingstone was Celt to the very core, with his adventurous, audacious instinct of travel, and Christian too; and who can tell how much Ulva owed to Iona, and therefore how much, after many generations, Livingstone, and with him Africa, owed to Columba.

But we hasten to speak of Columba, not in the first and more peaceful period of his life, but in the second and more heroic and historical period of his missionary career.

Already Christian in his life, he was also, what he remained to the very last, a passionate lover and unwearied transcriber of books. He had few books. Demosthenes knew Thucydides well, for he had transcribed the historian eight times ; and we do not wonder that his genius was coloured and his oratory braced by the great original. Columba knew David's Psalter well, for we are told he had transcribed it three hundred times. To have transcribed the Psalms hundreds of times, and prayed them over tens of thousands of times, lets us into the secret of Columba's spirit and work. And it is a story, true in its main feature, about the transcription of the Psalter, which is the turning point between the two periods of his life. During the first period the strong iron will—the purged intensity of which inspired and ennobled his missionary career—had not yet been disciplined and mellowed, but broke out at times into bursts of ungoverned wilfulness and volcanic fire ; and obeying these during a long and laborious night, he had, unknown to the owner, St. Fillan, copied his Latin Psalter ; that copy (still in existence, according to Irish archæologists) he was asked to give up ; but on refusing, was tried by the king, and condemned. He fled, and stirring up his kinsmen, came to battle and bloodshed ; he himself urging the fight on the very field. Then an ecclesiastical council excommunicated him. Cut off by Church and State, he wandered, long and sorrow-stricken, in the wilds of his native Donegal ; and at last, partly to

prove his penitence, partly to embark on a new and nobler campaign—one not of wrath but of peace—not of bloodshed but of salvation, he left Ireland to minister to the Scottish Picts. Half chief, half missionary, he left with twelve friends, in a coracle,—a wicker boat covered with hides. Since Paul left Troas, and sailed with Silas and Timothy to Macedonia, and until the 120 Puritans left Plymouth to found New England, never has vessel gone forth on such an Iliad and Odyssey. They passed on in the perilous voyage till Colonsay (Columba's Isle), and then Oronsay, was reached. Climbing to the highest point of the latter, the old Donegal hills still beckoned dreamy and tender-hued in the distance. The deep passion for the Emerald Isle—known too well, repeated so often in many an Irish emigrant—had nearly overcome him. He hastened on farther north, till, Ireland no longer visible, the coracle sped into the bay, called after it to this hour the *Port-a-hurrach*. There in Iona he set foot, in his forty-second year, with his great life work yet to be done.

Most men, and not the least, most Christian men, need even in later middle life an awakening of the whole soul almost equal to a second conversion; and if they are to enter upon some hard and untried scene, if they are to bring into action some new force or quality, God will see well to it that the change that is needed shall befall them. The old passion and poetry, as well as piety of Columba, had to be touched to finer issues. The slag was now separate from the pure metal, and that was fused and molten in the stern repentance of a middle-aged man, to be poured out into a spirit and an enterprise of a larger and finer mould.

The same change in essence occurs, strange to say, in the other two men who, with Columba, are the three greatest religious benefactors of Scotland. John Knox was forty-two years of age before he dared, after tears and agony, to preach his first sermon. Thomas Chalmers was thirty-two when his old nature was at last purged by the fire and transformed by the light of the new life. One can hardly forget also, that in another department of our history the Battle of Bannockburn, achieved by Robert Bruce in his matured wisdom and courage, was closely connected with the passionate and reckless blow he aimed at Cummin in the Dumfries Abbey of Greyfriars. And, in sacred history, it was the blow Moses dealt to the Egyptian that sent him into Midian, there to learn more of God and of himself, and be thereby fitted in deep middle life to be the leader of Israel.

And if Columba was now fully fitted for his work, not less in God's providence was Iona fitted to be its scene and its starting point. There are two islands lying close to each other in the group of the now wildly darkened, now enchantingly brightened, Hebrides, which strike most different, but almost equally deep chords in a thoughtful traveller. Staffa rises alone, a God-made cathedral, or rather a little chapel attached by sameness of structure to the distant cathedral of the Giant's Causeway. There the Atlantic awakens in thunder-Psalm the praises of the august Creator—or there, amidst the solemn silence under its majestic roof, the heart adores the Builder and Divinity of this primeval shrine. Iona lies low and small, a few miles off—low, for its highest hill is not more than 300 feet; and small, for it is only three miles long and one mile

broad—a homely scene contrasted with the pillared magnificence of basaltic Staffa, and with the lofty Benmore of neighbouring Mull, or the far-ranging Cuchullins of gigantic Skye. In itself unexpressive in feature, it has yet above it the sweet blues of the heavens, and around it the solemn purples of the Atlantic, and, part of itself, the silver shore, with the magic brightness of its sand, heightened by the clear ripple and the smiling shadows of its waters ; otherwise, it is altogether ordinary, and would hardly be noticed for its own sake. But since Columba landed and lived in it, all is changed, all is haunted and hallowed. The bay of the landing on the western side ; the site of his cell and church on the eastern ; the *Reilig-Ohrain*—the old cemetery where himself once lay, and where still lies much saintly and kingly dust—itself the oldest cemetery in Britain and in the world, where till a late year the dead were still laid ; the knoll whence he gave his last prophetic blessing to the island ; the cross of Maclean, only remaining relic of Columba's time : the spot on whose hard stones he died on his knees amid the angel deeds of a great Christian toil which, in the eyes of his grateful and sorrowing disciples, made the midnight bright with angel forms ; these, and one more place memorable in the coming centuries, the “Port of the Martyrs” where twice the Danes slaughtered the monks of Iona, and to which time after time came the sound of the long wailing coronach, when kings of Scotland and Norway, and Lords of the Isles, were brought to be buried near the dust of Columba, and passed along the green grassy *Machar* plain, till, with all funeral pomp, they were let down in the place of sepulture ; these, and above all

the sense of Columba's life, still dominating in memory, 1300 years since he lived here, and still strong in the nation he blesses to this hour, touch the humble Iona with a light of spiritual elevation and pathos, which surpasses Staffa with its majestic awe, and raises it in supreme power far above the mighty tumult of the Highland hills around.

This island, once so insignificant that it was known only as "Hy" or "I," an island, then later as the island of the Druids, was known long and well as Icolmkillie, the isle of the cell of Columba. It was ceded to him by his kinsman the king of the Picts, and very probably the better liked by Columba because here he could spread the religion of Christ where once had been a shrine and seat of Druidism. For thirty-three years his work lay here and far on the mainland of Scotland.

In this island he began to build his church, not a stately minster, nor even of the solid and chiselled stonework we still see in the well-known ruins of the church built centuries afterwards by the piety of the good Queen and Saint Margaret of Dunfermline, but, as was the custom, of wood, thatched with the ivy which still abounds in Iona. Then came dwellings, far more humble, for himself and his friends. Columba's own cell had a hard floor and a stone pillow, whereon for years he slept. Then followed ploughing, sowing, and reaping, herding, and fishing. But all this manual toil, whilst a discipline for the body, gave room for mental work. This lay chiefly in the study of the Scriptures, perhaps also of some treatise of the profound Augustine, or homily of the eloquent Chrysostom. Above all, there was continual transcription

of the Psalter and the Gospels. This was their only printing press. Columba was an unwearied transcriber, and had a severe eye for absolute accuracy in others: "Your MS. is perfect," said he to a scholar, "but you have omitted an *i* once." But even this was made servant to the spiritual work. The day and the night, also, were duly divided into set periods, when psalms were sung and prayers repeated, and thus the Divine worship and service crowned all. Such was the physical, mental, and spiritual discipline of Iona. Meanwhile, they rooted out Druidism from the hearts of its few natives, and planted the Gospel of Christ. Day by day boats came from far and near, with penitents and inquirers, or with invitations to Columba to cross to the mainland and arbitrate in clan feuds; and once, at Inverness, and for the first time in our history, he consecrated and anointed a king.

Either invited, or at set seasons of his own choice, he went from his retreat, "his temple of holy industry," and, on foot or on horseback, traversed the dreary moors and steep mountains of Inverness and Argyll, far down across the Grampians to the Lowlands. Wherever he went he preached, and settled holy men who should carry on the work. For centuries his work grew at Dunkeld, St. Andrews, Abercorn, Govan on the Clyde, Culross, Coldingham, Lochleven near Kinross, Brechin, Portmoak, Melrose. There, and in multitudes of other places, either in person or by his scholars, he wrought. Tradition tells us of his conferring at Shiskan in Arran, with St. Molios of the Holy Isle. A more historical and memorable interview is that held with Kentigern, the good St. Mungo, on the spot where Glasgow Cathedral rises by the

now hidden Molendinar Burn, among the vast 600,000 of the modern city. Glasgow and Iona, what different histories ! Very likely he visited the cell on Inchcolm, within sight of the unrivalled Edinburgh, called after himself, where, according to Sir James Simpson, there is a genuine Columban cell or oratory of the sixth century — his very period. So the Word grew. Never once do we read of force or persecution being used to spread it, for, though Columba, Abbot of Iona, crowned kings both in Scotland and in Ireland, he never asked their arms in his apostolic work.

Not long after Columba died, men of his own fashion and spirit went from Iona ; one man in especial, St. Aidan, evangelised England from the Tyne to the Humber, from Northumberland to Mercia, restored Christianity, almost stamped out by the Danes, and in Lindisfarne established the mother church which afterwards grew into Durham Cathedral, and owed for centuries, as its present learned bishop, Dr. Lightfoot, said a few weeks since, allegiance to the Abbot of Iona.

This is not the place fully to discuss or nicely to measure the ecclesiastical position of Columba. • Certainly he was not an Episcopalian, much less a Prelatist, in any modern sense ; though the Abbot of Iona was long the spiritual Primate of Scotland and of the North of England. To call him Presbyterian would not be literally correct, though there was parity among the clergy, and the only superior was the elected abbot. Nor can he be called a Romanist, much less a Papist, because the Christianity of Ireland came straight from France, and so indirectly from Asia Minor, and never once did Columba acknowledge any dependence on Rome. As

little can he be called Protestant, inasmuch as, without a fully developed Popery, Protestantism as such could not and did not exist. But he was in spirit and doctrine much nearer to Luther than to Pius V. His love and trust in Christ involved all that is expressed in justification, though not with the needed and anxious accuracy which is the glory and blessing of the Reformation; and whilst Columba might not be untouched by some traces of error which afterwards grew into serious evil, still his spiritual needs and work kept him right and strong. Though himself, for the sake of his work, unmarried, it was no rule of Iona to compel celibacy. In brief, he belonged to the grand old and ever new denomination of Christians, men full of faith and of the Holy Ghost and of power.

Looking away from the work, so rapid and durable, let us look at the man who was the soul of it all. He was outwardly of princely mien and bearing, wearing without reproach the grand old name of gentleman, tall in stature, keeping the body under, but in no ascetic spirit; for "he always showed," says his biographer, Adamnamus, "a cheerful countenance," the Columba-like expression. But the eye that softened with tenderness to the sick and the penitent; that returned pitifully the wistful look of his old horse, now worn out like himself through many a sore road; that dared not look back to Ireland—that dove-like eye could, eagle or lion-like, light up with the old but now purged fire of wrath as he denounced the oppressor or rebuked and condemned the flagrant sinner; could look keen into the visions of heavenly truth, or confront unflinchingly a hundred miles of moor and mountain, or whole hordes of men who set themselves

against his work, He had the imagination of a bard, the heart of a philanthropist, the voice, sweet and loud, of an orator, the sagacity of a statesman, the instinct of a ruler, knowing how to be feared, but more how to be loved; above all, he had the soul of a Christian, and, in a life quickened and elevated by the breath of prayer, he did a great work for Christ and for his fellow-men.

But the time came when, like Israel, Columba must die. He had a wish to depart on Easter Day, but he put it aside lest on that day of resurrection-joy a shadow should fall on the hearts of his children as their head was taken from them. He drew together, as dying men are wont to do, all his life, now it was about to close, into a few last deeds and words, full of simplicity and depth. Too weak to walk, he was carried in a rustic waggon to the workers in the field, and on a height still marked, blessed them in their work. On the Saturday before he died, he went to see the granary, and came away glad that his children should have bread enough after he was gone. As he came back to the monastery he sat down by the cross of Maclean, and there, as he rested and mused, his old white horse, which carried daily the milk from the dairy, put his head over his master's shoulders, and looked piteously as if bidding him farewell. Diarmid, his faithful servant, wished to send the animal away, but with the greatness of heart of men like Columba (reminding us of that most pathetic scene in which, when Sir Walter Scott was dying, his dogs came and licked his hand, and his worn eye kindled afresh) he said, "No, let him weep for my departure. The Creator has revealed to this poor dumb animal what

He has hidden from thee a reasonable man." He blessed the faithful horse, and with a heart full of a prophetic impulse, he went up to the hill of the Abbot and pronounced over his beloved island, seen for the last time, its future glory. When in the monastery he busied himself in his cell transcribing the Psalter, not now in that covetous spirit which cost him his country and his peace, but in a Divine calm and hope. It was the 10th verse of Psalm xxxiv., "Inquirentes autem Dominum non deficient omni bono," "They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing." He wrote no more that day nor ever. "I must stop here," he said, "Baithen will write the rest." We cannot forget here the like life-ending of a kindred soul, Bede, in Jarrow, 139 years afterwards. "It is time," he said to those weeping around him, "that I should go to my Creator. I long to depart and to be with Christ." One of his scholars then said to him, "Dear teacher, there is still one sentence to be written;" he answered, "Write quickly." The young man shortly after said, "The sentence is written," and then, the last line completed, he was ready to go, and looking steadfastly up cried, "Glory to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost," he too went away. Columba rose, and seated on the stone which was his pillow for years, sent his last admonition to love God and one another. At midnight, as the bell rung, he rose to prayers; he was the first to reach and kneel at the altar. Diarmid followed, groping his way, and crying, "Where art thou, father?" He found him lying before the altar, and, placing himself at his side, raised "the good grey head that all men knew." Columba never spoke again; only he opened his eyes

upon them full of love and joy, raised his hand to bless them, as many years after the dying John Knox lifted his finger to point his hope in God. The hand sank powerless by his side. The oar of his life-long toil dropped from it,—he had touched the shore,—gone into the port of everlasting peace, and was home at last. It was in 597, and he had lived seventy-six years.

But Columba lives still. He wrote no book ; he did a nobler and more lasting work—he inspired souls ; he brought them to God and to Christ ; he laid the foundation of all our history. Our great Scotsman, Thomas Carlyle, musing among the old Druid blocks of Stonehenge, is thus recorded by Emerson : “The old times of England impress Carlyle much ; he reads little, he says, in these last years but the ‘Acta Sanctorum,’ the fifty-three volumes of which are in the London Library. He finds all English history therein. He can see, as he reads, the old saint of Iona sitting there and writing, a man to men. These ‘Lives’ show plainly that the men of these times believed in God, and in the immortality of the soul.”

This witness is true ; and we too shall find all human history in the Gospel at last, if we work in our own day in the old spirit of faith ; but if we are to do so, we must wait patiently as well as work bravely, for the best fruit of a life, like that of Columba, is found centuries after the man is away. “God,” said John Wesley, “buries the workman, but carries on the work.” It is a singular coincidence that the Sabbath before that on which Columba died in Iona, Augustine from Rome had inaugurated Roman Christianity

in Canterbury, by the baptism of the Saxon king Ethelbert. Columba's and Augustine's work has, amidst all errors and changes, made our country a nation and a mother of nations. There was no need then, that, in fond love and admiration, Adamnanus should crown the noble simple life of the great abbot of Iona with a wreath of miracles and visions. The great miracle he wrought, as is God's gift to all true souls, was the life he led and the work he did. The great vision he saw is common to all who look away from themselves and the world, to Christ and His cause. His only distinction was that he did the one with his whole heart, and set the other always before him. And this, too, belongs to all, even the humblest and feeblest, who seek like grace, and being true to it, shall attain like honour.

## VIII.

*FRANCIS XAVIER.*

Two young men went to the University of Paris, the one to the College of La Marche, the other to that of St. Barbe, in the same year 1523. The one was John Calvin, a Frenchman, in his fourteenth year, even now as always, master of himself, with the national gift of lucid expression and unshrinking logic, combined with a cold manner, which, however, only hid a passionate will. The other, Francis Xavier, was in his seventeenth year, a Spaniard—a Biscayan, with all his country's love of adventure and glow of imagination. Possibly they never met each other—in after life they pursued courses far apart, though Xavier bore certain marks throughout life of the new Protestant life which filled the air at that period, and of which afterwards Calvin became the chief. In Calvin you have the Reformation in its keenest type, alike of intellectual freedom and spiritual fervour—in Xavier the reaction against the Reformation pushed to its most absolute obedience to authority, and in its most self-consuming zeal.

Spiritual life and truth still lingered in the Roman Church. But the reaction came more in the revival of life than in the return to truth. The Council of Trent, which re-adjusted the system of theology over

against Melancthon and the Reformers, did not save the Church. That was done by the resurrection of a new and nobler spirit; for however much we must condemn Popery, we must never forget the candour of Him who said, "Forbid him not, for he that is not against us is for us." The Theatines; more conspicuously the Oratorians, breathing the spirit, and formed by the rules of that true saint, Philip Neri, who never forgot his early training in the convent of Saint Mark in Florence, nor ceased to be inspired by the living traditions of the great Savonarola; Carlo Borromeo with his Oblates; but above all, the Jesuits saved Rome. And while Loyola was the head and hand of the company of Jesus, to Xavier belongs the merit of securing for its early missionary work the heart of Christendom—for Christendom gave, and still gives, the homage of its spontaneous admiration to a man who was indeed one of the company of Jesus in the highest sense, and who was also a missionary of His Church, unrivalled since the days of St. Paul.

We have thus marked the relation of the Apostle of India to his times. We shall not attempt to try even to mark what has passed in the thousand years that separate him from the Apostle of Scotland, St. Columba. Xavier was born in 1506, in the castle of Xavier in Navarre, as its mountains slope down into Spain. His date removes him from the front rank, from the Primates of the European movement. Luther, Zwingli, and Melancthon, represent the first, the creative era of the Reformation. Philip Neri and Ignatius Loyola stand in the same relation to the reaction. Xavier, like Carlo Borromeo, belongs to the second generation, for he was born a year after John

Knox, and three years before Calvin. Like Columba, he was of princely blood, and he always bore himself as a Spanish Knight while he worked as a Christian missionary. All his brothers became soldiers, as was the custom of the family. He, chivalrous in spirit as they, and more chivalrous in his life work, had that temperament of thoughtfulness and aspiration that lay more open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. The Bay of Biscay, with its splendour in calm—its sublimity in storm—the valleys, forests, and mountains of the Pyrenees, familiar in their exquisite charm and glory to his daily view, tempered and also lifted up his young nature into their own beauty and magnificence. So growing, he went, not into the army, but into a University; and the most famous of all in Europe at that time was the University of Paris. In the same year, as we have said, Calvin went there also. Protestant martyrs were during these days burnt at the stake in Paris, and the sight of their calm triumphant faith haunted for life the heart of Calvin. Xavier, high-souled and susceptible, felt the force of the current flowing strongly around him—but another mind became his master, and moved his roused feelings in another direction. Calvin did an immense work—sending abroad his thoughts while himself remained in Geneva—the fixed centre of the cyclone he raised and ruled. Xavier left enduring impressions in his almost ubiquitous career—moving others, himself being moved. Meanwhile both studied unknown to each other.

With whatever exceptions, it is the rule that the new governing ideas that are to leaven the masses of the people in the next generation shall have their birth and first movement among young fresh minds and

hearts. From the Universities of Wittemberg with Luther; of Edinburgh with Chalmers; of Oxford with Newman, came the greatest impulse to the spread of the new thought of their respective periods; and so with the University of Paris in the time of the Reformation. Xavier, having passed through his student years, had become a teacher, lecturing on the Physics and Ethics of Aristotle, whom Dante, two centuries earlier a student in the same University, called the master of them who know. Xavier, however, had not the temperament of a scholar and thinker. His real nature and vocation were yet to be discovered. And Loyola was to Xavier what Chalmers was to Alexander Duff; the influence which decided him.

A Spaniard like Xavier, and brought up a few miles apart, Loyola set himself to influence Xavier. He had already gained over Faber, a gentle Savoyard, and Xavier's room companion in the college—but in adding Xavier he knew he would gain one who would gain others. So, as we can easily understand in his first approaches, as has often been the effect of the Jesuit method, he alternately conciliated and repelled Xavier, who, amidst his amusements and carelessness, felt, yet feared, his subtle influence. One day, however, Loyola dropped in his hearing, as if casually, the great unanswerable question, “But what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?” It was a living seed, and the harvest was Xavier. The thought stung him, “What am I doing? Whither am I going?” and he prayed as he had never done before, and the great change came. From that day, as he himself said, “I ceased to tamper with the heresies that abounded, as did many of my contem-

poraries." He succumbed entirely to the leading of Loyola ; but as little can we doubt that from that hour the love of Christ and of souls was his ruling passion. Let it not be forgotten, that in the first Jesuits there was much of Jesus and little of that cunning sinister worldly policy which the word " Jesuit " now represents. Though not Protestants, yet the glow of the Reformation had purged many from much of the dross of Romish evil, and produced in many who still opposed the Reformation, new types of character worthy of any Christian Church.

The noble hymn he afterwards wrote on the love of Christ, which is adopted by and sung in many churches, is the key-note of his conversion and of his whole course.

" My God, I love Thee, not because  
I hope for heaven thereby ;  
Nor yet that they who love Thee not  
Must burn eternally.

Thou, O my Jesus ! Thou didst me  
Upon the Cross embrace ;  
For me didst bear the nails and spear,  
And manifold disgrace.

Then why, O blessed Jesus Christ !  
Should I not love Thee well ?  
Not for the sake of winning Heaven,  
Or of escaping Hell.

Nor with the hope of gaining aught,  
Not seeking a reward,  
But as Thyself hast loved me,  
O ever-loving Lord,

E'en so I love Thee, and will love,  
And in Thy praise will sing,  
Because Thou art my Lord and God,  
And my Eternal King."

Put these lines alongside of the words of the great Protestant metaphysician and mystic, Jonathan Edwards, and you feel the real oneness of all Christian souls—"True religion in a great measure consists in holy affections. A love of divine things, for the beauty and sweetness of their moral excellence, is the spirit of all holy affections."

Henceforward Xavier and Loyola worked as with one soul in their separate spheres. Long afterwards Loyola drew up his celebrated manual called "*Spiritual Exercises*;" but meanwhile he was training his slowly gathered disciples in their spirit. And on a memorable day, in the church of Montmartre, Paris, Xavier became one of the first six who solemnly, and under the new name, "*The Company of Jesus*," devoted themselves to its two great objects—the first, the preservation of the Catholic Church, and the second, the spread of that Church. These were its two fields, the home and the foreign; and herein at least Loyola copied Scripture precedent as well as followed wisest strategy. For thus the Jesuits, at the bidding of the Roman Church, contested Protestantism in Europe, and sent some of her bravest soldiers to fight the battles of the Church in India, Japan, and China. To act on the offensive, however audacious, is tenfold more safe, and likely to be more successful, than the bravest defensive action.

Meanwhile, though fixed in purpose, the Jesuits were not rash. Xavier spent seven years in Italy—in Venice, Verona, Vincenza, and Rome. These years were the time of his apprenticeship. He nursed daily the sick and dying in the hospitals. Like that noble woman, Sister Dora, he would suck the poisonous stuff out of

ulcerated throats. Day after day he lived in rags, poverty, solitude, and prayer. When not preaching in the streets and market-places, he was breathing the corruption of hospital wards or prison cells. There is not a hint of murmur. The young Spanish nobleman, the popular Parisian professor, stripped himself of all rank, and denied himself all refinements. Many miracles are put down to his account, and the power of miracles he was not averse to claim, though he never claimed it; but this life of self-sacrifice, in the teeth of all old likings, borne unflinchingly and rejoicingly, is the unbroken miracle of this and every other part of his life. Such great spiritual spectacles as those of Luther praying and fainting in the Erfurt cell, and Xavier living a beggar and a nurse in the Venetian hospital, lift us up into that common Christian atmosphere, without which Protestant piety cannot breathe, and in the presence of which Romish error cannot altogether kill spiritual life.

After these seven years Xavier was sent to India as missionary alike of the King of Portugal and of the Pope, to extend the Church. One day, another appointed to the work having failed, he was called to go; on the morrow he was on the way. He was like our own noble William Burns, of whom we are often reminded when reading about Xavier, and who, when asked by the Newcastle Presbyterian Synod when he would be ready to go to China, startled them by saying, to-morrow. He was ready to go that very moment, so far as his faith was concerned, and his carpet bag required only a few hours of longer preparation.

As he sailed from Lisbon, Xavier walked all the way to it from Italy, and passing by his old home in Spain

he went on, though his mother was dying. Xavier was thirty-five years old when he started, and in eleven years his work was done. At this age, the middle of life's day, when Dante says he began his great poem, Xavier began his greater life. Looking at it for a moment, even Carlyle, after his most overflowing denunciation of Jesuitism, says, "It is to be hoped one is not blind withal to the celebrated virtues that are in Jesuitism; to its missionary zeal, its contempt of danger." It is to be hoped not, else the worse, not for Xavier, but for the man who cannot see. Obedience, absolute and instantaneous, is the rule of Jesuitism—obedience not merely to the voice of God but to the command of the General. This is the opposite quality to that which Protestantism asserted, namely, private opinion and personal faith in Christ. But Xavier believed in obedience and gave it.

Sailing for India with the Viceroy of King John of Portugal, he might have fared sumptuously every day, but he chose to live among the sick, gave up his bed to the dying, slept on the bare floor, and preached the Gospel. At last, thirteen months after he left Lisbon, he reached Goa, the capital of the Portuguese possessions in India. He went at once to the hospitals to tend the sick, and to the schools to train the children, knowing that through both he should reach all hearts. Light your fire at the base of the pyramid, it will find its way by and by to the top. Leaving these places, he went forth, bell in hand, through the streets, and summoned the people round him and his message. It was the method of the prophet Jonah, with his one awful cry, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown;" with this difference, that Xavier came as the

apostle of salvation. It was the method of Christ Himself on the sea-shore ; on the mount ; in the streets and lanes. It was the method of Wesley and Whitefield ; as it is still that of our own missionaries in Africa and Rajpootana.

Xavier is at last fairly at work. Never a linguist—speaking most frequently through an interpreter—his life of poverty, pity, prayer, however, spoke plainly for him on behalf of the Saviour he brought. He went on, bell ringing in one hand, crucifix lifted up in the other. That dumb symbol spoke one truth at least, the mightiest of all, that of God incarnate dying for sinners. The traveller who visits the cathedral of Milan is awed and melted by the noble building, but when his eye fixes on the great crucifix over the high altar, thrown out amid the streaming light, there comes upon him a thrill of highest joy at the central object of all—the symbol of the divine mercy in Christ. This, at least, is true, that the difference of a cross as symbol is immense when compared with the mean and foul symbols men see everywhere in the idol grove and temple ; and what Livingstone said, in another relation, is true here also, that it is the comparison of native Christians, however rude, with native heathens, and not with Christians in civilised lands, that marks the immense step in advance between a convert and one who never heard of Christ.

But Xavier was more than a bold denouncer of sin and a fervent preacher of Christ ; he brought also into his work those qualities of fine tact, of high breeding, and of compliance in trifles for the sake of his great work, in his personal dealings with men, especially with princes and rulers, which attracted and con-

ciliated. Moreover, his poverty, his squalid attire, his feet bruised and bleeding with long journeys—for as a rule he walked on the worst roads or on none—even hundreds of miles, arrested the dullest. His hardships were sometimes almost beyond belief. He seemed to woo hardship like a bride. The sufferings, and also the joys of the early Church, and of the heroic Covenanters, are recalled, as we read the story of his daily dying to self and living to the Master. Not that he himself speaks of these things—he left that for others to do. The picture which he unconsciously draws of himself in the epistles he wrote to Loyola, or to his fellow-missionaries and his converts, and which give you his real likeness, are more full of action than of suffering, and exhibit a mixture of habitual joy as well as keen shrewdness. There are indeed at times darker tints, but these are mentioned only in connection with great consolations.

At Goa, where he spent his first years, he produced a wide reformation of manners, and in many cases of spirit. His preaching was powerful; and Henry J. Coleridge, nephew of the great poet and philosopher, his latest English biographer, speaks also of his miracles, referring to those enumerated in the Bull of his canonisation. Xavier, however, never relates these, though even he was not disinclined to raise the marvellous into the miraculous; and his spiritual force, his moral irresistibility, his almost supernatural energy and patience, may well explain the genuine wonders of his work. It is not to be disguised, that when we read of his baptizing 1000 in one day—nay, in a solitary case, 10,000—and when we see he is so well satisfied with the rate as to add, in respect of those

he baptized, *Feci Christianos* (I have made Christians), we feel painfully how much superstition was in himself, and how much superficiality must have been in his work. Still it is not to be forgotten, that many churches were established, that to this hour footprints of Xavier are seen in the far East; and above all, that fifty-one years after he died, during a terrible persecution following a change of dynasty, there were hundreds of men and women in Japan ready to die rather than deny Christ.

As was his custom, when at the very height of his success, Xavier left Goa to work among the Paravas, the pearl fishers on the coast extending from Cape Comorin to the Island of Manaar. These, by reason of their occupation, were among the lowest of the Indian population. Among them Xavier became a Parava to the Paravas, and lived with them and like them. Like Chalmers, who never looks greater than when rejoicing over a convert excavated out of the West Port quarry, Xavier looks greater among the Parava hovels than in the palaces of Japan. We have not space to follow him by land and sea, in weary scorching travels, amidst storm and shipwreck. He liked to leave, then revisit a place, that he might deepen old and create fresh impressions. Travancore, Manaar, Malacca, the Moluccas, the Isle of Moro, the Paravas, and many others, are names of his battle-fields and victories, as the Wellington statue in St. Paul's Cathedral bears all round it the names of the great scenes of the Duke's courage, from Toulon to Waterloo.

We do not wonder that before Xavier was forty he was grey-headed. Forty hours on a plank at sea, innumerable hungers and thirsts, unsleeping nights,

unresting days, breathing in plague-stricken hospitals, facing armed savages, praying for days in forests and amid swamps, sometimes well-nigh dead through fever, —these made his head early grey. But his heart was always glad; and ever and again in his letters he breaks out into thanks. There were times when, wearied out in soul and body, he retreated to rest—and nowhere did he love more to retreat than among his first friends and converts at Goa. Thence, in the quiet gardens of the College, he writes to Loyola: “For what death is more bitter to me than to live without Christ when once we have tasted His preciousness, or to desert Him that we may follow our own desires? Believe me, no cross is to be compared to His cross; but, on the other hand, how happy it is to live in dying daily, and in mortifying our own will, and in seeking not our own but the things that are Jesus Christ’s. Sometimes, as he meditated, he would cry out in transport, because of the abundance of his revelations, “Enough, O Lord, enough.” So, in the pleasant garden at Goa, he took a quiet breathing-time, and sent down his roots deeper in God to gather the sap and strength that lie there.

One of his bravest enterprises was to the Isle of Moro, with its savage cannibals. His friends tried to dissuade him, but he exclaimed, “Shall the Isle of Moro be the only place to receive no benefit from redemption, and when Jesus offered to His Eternal Father all the nations of the earth as His inheritance, was this excepted from the offering? If I should die by their hands, who knows but that all after might receive the faith? for it is certain that the seed of the Gospel has ever increased more largely by the blood of martyrs than by the sweat of missionaries.” Writing at

that very time to Loyola he says,—“The danger to which we are exposed and the labours we undergo for the sake of God alone, are an inexhaustible source of spiritual joys. These islands, bare as they are of everything, are the very places for a man to lose his sight in with excess of weeping, but they are tears of joy. For my part, I never remember to have tasted such intense delight; and these consolations of the soul are so pure, so exquisite, and so continual, they take away all sense of suffering.” Such tones of joy and triumph rise high above all errors and infirmities, and tell of a noble peace and might which only Christ can give.

He passed on to Japan, 4000 miles off. Here he met with men altogether different from the cannibals of Moro. The Japanese were then, as they are now, the Athenians, the Parisians of the East—witty, luxurious, sharp in mind, fluent in speech, hard to impress; sceptical alike in their systems of philosophy and theology. Japan was therefore to Xavier what Athens and Corinth combined were to Paul. A man of perfect self-denial—walking on foot, with a little bundle in one hand containing his food and his garments, and carrying the vessels for the sacrament in the other—a man of unshaken faith, he was yet a man of the world in the best sense—full of tact, delicate and flexible; a man, in fact, for winning others. He could not only toil, he could do what is harder—he could suffer. Spat upon one day, he only wiped his countenance with his handkerchief, and continued to speak; and this deed of forbearance moved multitudes never moved before. Even the Bonzes, the priests, were not able to withstand his magnanimous bearing of this insult—this cross. Here, again, as

everywhere, he had great success; but he left soon, saying, "I come to sow, not to reap." Many years afterwards, there were 400,000 Christians and hundreds of churches in Japan. Right or wrong, that was his impassioned method. In this also William Burns resembled him as he moved on from spot to spot, dropping the seed, but not waiting to gather the harvest.

Leaving Goa for the last time in 1552, he returned no more till he was brought back dead, to lie there to this hour. He landed at Malacca. There the fever plague raged, and at once Xavier went to the hospital. But bound in spirit, he set his face steadfastly towards China, and after many days he reached the low sandy island of Sancian, off the coast near Canton. He yearned to cross, and though it was death to land, asked to be put overnight on shore. But the Portuguese, his former friends, deserted him, refused to provide him with the most ordinary food, and he was attacked by a most violent fever. Leaving the vessel, with its constant motion, which prevented him turning his heart to God, he asked to be conveyed on shore. He lay in a tent constructed of stakes and branches of trees. There, in the intervals of fever, his soul panted after his God. In the delirium he cried, "*Deus meus, et omnia*" ("My God, and my all"). As it increased he talked of nothing but God, and of passing into China. These were varied by broken cries, "*Jesu, fili David, miserere mei*"—"O Sanctissima Trinitas!" At length, on Friday the 2nd December 1552, his eyes were bathed in tears, and fixing with a loving look of adoration on his crucifix, he cried out his last words with a loud voice, "*In te,*

*Domine, speravi; non confundar in eternum*" ("In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted; let me not be confounded for ever"). He was forty-six years of age, and had in the last eleven done his great work. His dying words were those which close the great *Te Deum*. It is the lonely appeal in its closing broken words which human weakness makes to Him whom it began adoring with united praise. Three hundred years afterwards, William Burns ended his life not far off, with the last ascription of the Lord's Prayer, "For Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory." The dead body of Xavier was brought back to his beloved Goa; and there he lies, full of rest from head to foot, a saint indeed: saint beatified of the Roman Church, saint also in deepest homage and love of the Church Universal.

I shall not excuse Xavier's errors, nor linger on his defects. Amidst all errors, he carried in his heart the highest of all truths, the love of Christ: amidst all defects, he achieved the greatest work of bringing the weakest and the worst to its trust and transfiguration. The Roman Church has had many saintly souls among its children later than Xavier—a Pascal and a Fénelon; earlier than him, a Francis of Assisi and a Catharine of Sienna; in our own days, a Lacordaire and a Eugénie de Guérin. These are notes of God's presence in her when other notes utterly fail, or are turned into notes of error or evil. The Universal Church also owns such as among her noblest children, and glorifies God in them with that joy and tenderness which Christ felt for saints in Sardis. The purest and wisest Christian knows more than any other that he can learn much from the struggles and victories

of God's grace in such saints amidst all their darkness and weakness. And he must be a Christian, self-satisfied indeed, who does not feel his love to Christ brightened, and his zeal for souls inflamed, by even this imperfect outline of the life and work of Francis Xavier.

## IX.

*DAVID BRAINERD.*

THREE things have made the name of David Brainerd memorable—his biography by Jonathan Edwards; his eulogy by Robert Hall; and the preference for him, as a kind of Protestant patron saint, of Henry Martyn and Robert M'Cheyne. But these would not have given to, much less preserved for, his memory its strange spiritual charm and power, apart from the lonely self-denying Christlike life of the man himself.

David Brainerd belonged to the third generation after the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers on Plymouth Rock. On both father's and mother's side he came of families who had sprung from clergymen in Norfolk and Lincolnshire. The grandfather of his mother preached in the Old Boston of John Robinson, the minister of the Pilgrims both in England and in Holland. His blood was of what we may call the bluest Puritan colour. The serious piety, the Calvinistic doctrine, the unflinching patriotism, the equally unflinching love of liberty of these contemporaries of Cromwell's Ironsides, are the high elements, alike Christian and human, that have made America the country it is in its noblest features. Brainerd inherited these qualities—alike spiritual and heroic.

The Pilgrim Fathers landed in 1620. More than a hundred years afterwards, in 1718, Brainerd was born at Haddam, Connecticut. The Puritan depth of doctrine and life still remained in New England, when in Old England it was becoming shallow. Shut up within the wilderness, guarded by a simple unspeculative life, which only by dint of hard toil could keep existence in any measure of comfort, Puritanism still stamped its sharp-edged image on their thoughts and characters. So, we find its influence supreme and unquestioned in the training of Brainerd. "I was," as he truly says, "from my youth something sober, and inclined to be melancholy rather than the contrary." Even at his seventh or eighth year, thoughts of death—sin—conversion to God, were familiar to him; and we find in him exactly the same process through which Edwards at a like date passed. With Edwards too, as with Brainerd, the years that followed brought reaction, carelessness, and declension; but when body and mind were growing up to manhood, when reflection again awoke, and the two paths of life parted clearly, and decision for one or other must be made; again, the old question of childhood as to conversion, came up for manhood's reply. Then followed days of secret fasting, reading of the Bible, and prayer. What nobler course could a youth of eighteen or nineteen enter on? In a most interesting paper Brainerd gives the varying steps that led to that change which at length brought the new sense of Christ's salvation, and a divine life, as its fruit. Two things out of the many others in this decisive experience should not be left unnoticed. First, the violent conflict—even to bitter repulsion—with God's sovereignty, and especially

with that sovereignty in the over-severe testing of a willingness to be lost if God so wished it. This was the sharp peak which the daring climber of those days tried to reach. This self-annihilation—this absolute crucifixion of self—lay on the one side; and corresponding to it on the other side, lay as the positive element of the new life, a love of God purely for His own moral excellence in its supreme beauty and purity. Between these two was the path of the renewed soul moving on, not in keen feelings either of pain or of joy drawn from the lower sources either of sense or imagination, but in those emotions which are purely of the spirit—meekness, love, self-surrender, contemplation, and likeness to God.

Such were the main elements of what may be called Brainerd's spiritual exercises—so different from those of Loyola—so different also from those of Luther, who placed in the foreground of conversion the freedom from condemnation; but so kindred, though in a different form of doctrine, with Tauler and Fénelon, as also with Thomas à Kempis.

It was a stern discipline standing in wholesome contrast with the too easy and practically antinomian religion of many. At last, "out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." "My former concern," he says, "and exercise, and religious affections were now gone. I thought the Spirit of God had quite left me, but still was not distressed yet disconsolate, as if there was nothing in heaven or earth would make me happy. And having been thus endeavouring to pray (though being, as I thought, very stupid and senseless) for nearly half-an-hour (and by this time the sun was about half-an-hour

high, as I remember), then, as I was walking in a dark thick grove,—*unspeakable glory* seemed to open to the view, and apprehension of my soul. . . . I stood still and wondered, and admired. I knew that I never had seen before anything comparable to it for excellency and beauty; it was widely different from all the conceptions of God or things divine. I had no particular apprehension of any one person in the Trinity, either the Father, or the Son, or the Holy Ghost; but it appeared to me to be *Divine glory* that I then beheld; and my soul *rejoiced with joy unspeakable* to see such a God, such a glorious Divine Being, and I was inwardly pleased and satisfied that He should be *God over all* for ever and ever. . . . At this time the way of *salvation* opened to me with such infinite wisdom, suitableness, and excellency, that I wondered I should ever think of any other way of salvation.” This was the great dayspring from on high on Brainerd’s soul. Clouds, of course, came afterwards. “I was involved in *thick darkness*, and under great distress;” yet, he adds, “not of the same kind with my distress under convictions.” No, not of the same kind; for he never doubted the reality of the change: he only lamented that the growth following the change was so unlike the divine pattern. Christians of a meaner type are apt to stop at the point which Brainerd felt was but the starting-place for a new life, full of effort and progress. “Not as though I had ‘already attained’ ‘the regions beyond’—the ‘Amplius’—the ‘Excelsior;’” these he pressed towards, for these he panted, even when faint and out of breath. This noble aspiration had, indeed, to work under the subtle depressions of a consumptive frame; as well as amidst

the forest life, with its weird gloom and wretched diet, its melancholy loneliness; it had to struggle also with an ingrained temperament of despondency and an overstraining of mystical desire. Hence arose the difference between Edwards and Brainerd, essentially so alike. The ample breadth of Edwards' speculation carried him out of himself; while the sunny scenery in which his home lay charmed him by its soothing beauty, and sowed in him those rare and exquisite wild flowers of imagery, that cheer and surprise us amidst the solemnity of his feelings and the droughts of his logic. Brainerd's nerve, moreover, was more sensitive; he was indeed an infant crying for the light, with but few songs from God his Maker, in his weary nights. The great change in his inner life decided him to leave his father's farm in order to study for the ministry. The nearest college was that of Yale, in New Haven, beautiful as the City of Elms, and fresh beside the resounding waves of the Atlantic. We have visited the grave, in Wrexham Parish Church in Cheshire, of John Yale, who founded the college and gave it his name; and in 1863, in the heart of the Civil War, we spent a day in New Haven, when it was forsaken by its students, who had gone, as had also the Harvard and Princeton students, to the front of the battle for the Union and for Freedom. No other college in America has left its mark so deeply on the theology of the country. "The fathers of New England theology," says Dr. George Fisher, the worthy successor of so many illustrious men—"Edwards, Bellamy, Hopkins, West, Smalley, Emmons, Dwight—went out from Yale." It had also as one of its tutors Samuel Johnson, whom Professor

Fraser celebrates as the friend of Berkeley when in Rhode Island—the teacher also of Jonathan Edwards when at Yale College, and worthy of being mentioned with him as the second of the two great American metaphysicians of that time. It has also sent large supplies to the mission field, to which America gives many of her very best men. John Sargeant went first to the Stockbridge Indians. Jonathan Edwards followed him, teaching savages for seven years, during which also he wrote in four and a half months, in a log cabin, his treatise on the Freedom of the Will. Before him Brainerd had worked the same neighbourhood. The two Smiths, Azariah, and Eli the eminent Syrian missionary, and many others, also went from Yale.

To that college Brainerd came, and into his studies carried the same habits of devotion which he had learned on his farm, and took with him afterwards to the forest. As a student he was first in his year, and would have received the highest degree; but the one great flaw in his life interposed. 1740 was a year of revival of religion that spread over all New England. George Whitefield and Jonathan Edwards—two very different men—were, under God, its main agents. Whitefield brought from England that evangelical fire and that singular eloquence which God had blessed so greatly in other places. Edwards came with his calm, closely-reasoned sermons; with his white heat—white as the coldest snow—heat as of the most burning seraph; and the revival was kindled. During the same year the Spirit of God moved influences far remote from each other. It was the time of Methodism in England, of Secession from the Church of Scotland, and of men in the same Church—like John MacLaurin and John

Willison. In Wales the river of life overflowed its banks, and Charles of Bala, Howell Harris, and Daniel Rowlands, were its great evangelists. Franke planted Pietism, and Zinzendorf Moravianism, in Germany; and here, in America, the same breath touched souls to the same life. We do not know the tidal laws of God's grace: "The wind bloweth as it listeth;" but certainly wave after wave then rose from one great central movement, and smote shore after shore, till God's work resounded all abroad.

This revival was much needed, and was the answer to earnest prayers. Many had come to college like Brainerd, fresh from the baptism of the Divine Life. What the students felt did not so deeply affect the authorities of the college; and on one occasion Brainerd spoke of one of them most unadvisedly with his lips, and having sinned, like Moses, suffered in his own measure like him. His melancholy temper, his passionate sensibility, broke out into a great uncharitableness. Words privately spoken were most unjustly carried to the Professor against whom they were uttered. Brainerd was expelled the college; and though he earnestly desired it, and afterwards made the strongest acknowledgment of his error, he was denied his degree. It is a most curious chapter in New England religious life, and it is fully told, accompanied with original documents, by Dr. George Fisher, in his Yale Centenary Sermon. The authorities were wrong in persisting in their expulsion; as Brainerd was wrong in what led to that expulsion. He condemns his action frequently and severely in his diary, and Jonathan Edwards speaks with judicial impartiality of "his bitter zeal and rash uncharitable words." Such

was this turning-point in the life of Brainerd. Its effects were many and lasting. It gave a new tinge to his melancholy, but it also brought the habit of a new carefulness and a severer self-watchfulness. Wanting that fault, so sharply punished, he might not have been the Christian he became, and very likely not a missionary to the Indians; for it is after this event that we discern in him a greater tenderness for souls in their weakness and sin.

As is often the case, the man whom men cast out was chosen the more by the Master. Like Paul's persecution of the Church, which to the last haunted him with its dark shadow, this sin of Brainerd comes up in his far off forest prayers; and in long after years of remembrance it was a warning, a sifting, and an humbling lesson of self-distrust, which lifted him the more habitually to trust in the Lord. At first nothing but a thorn, and one exceedingly sharp, at last it blossomed into the flower of a pure meekness, and a tender self-abasement.

Now then, emptied of self, and cast out by others, his Master had made him ready for the work He had prepared for him. He refused other calls, gave up a large sum of his own yearly to educate a young friend for the ministry, and went to live his life among the Indians—the aborigines of the American Continent.

The early Christian settlers found in them, as being the only other inhabitants, their field of mission work. John Eliot, called emphatically “the Apostle of the Indians,” gave himself for fifty years to their teaching and conversion, by sermons, translations, constant intercourse, and a noble Christian life. A tract published in 1727, by Bishop Berkeley, bore the title, “A

Proposal for the better supplying Churches in our Foreign Plantations, and for converting the savage Americans to Christianity, by a College to be erected in the Summer Islands, otherwise called the Isles of Bermuda." And in 1728 Berkeley went out in the height of his fame, leaving the charms of his friendship with Pope, Arbuthnot, Bolingbroke, and Swift, and of his conferences on the highest themes at Court with Butler, that he might devote himself to train young Indian lads as future ministers among their own tribes. The whole story is of great interest, and is given with fine feeling in Professor Fraser's life of the Christian philosopher and apostle. The scheme broke down, because it relied on a Parliamentary endowment, which was never granted. The enthusiasm of Berkeley, that fired the most critical, not to say unbelieving, circles in London, spent itself in three years' waiting in Rhode Island; during which also he was engaged in those meditations which are contained in his characteristic and most popular book, "*Alciphron, or the Minute Philosopher*," published in 1734, and in which he anticipates by two years the argument Butler elaborated and made his own in his great "*Analogy*."

Brainerd, however, did more than Berkeley. Supported by a Scottish society, he went straight into the forests and the swamps, and without the apparatus of a college, entered on a work in which he had to be baker, cook, builder, house-servant, as well as missionary. Kannaumeeke, twenty miles from Stockbridge, was his first settlement. There, he tells us, till he built a cottage, "I lodged on a little heap of straw." No wonder the lonely consumptive man adds, "I was greatly exercised with inward trials and dis-

tresses all day, and in the evening my heart was sunk, and I seemed to have no God to go to. Oh that God would help me!" Add to that a diet of fired cakes, prepared by his own hand, or bread sour and mouldy, brought from a distance of fifteen miles, as also living now with the Indians (whom Edwards calls, and he knew them well, the savages in the far distant wilderness) in their wigwams; or, again, what we doubt not was an improvement, with a poor Scotchman, some penniless man who, like one of the greatest of them, Alexander Wilson, poet and ornithologist, had gone out from home-starvation to find something as bad, if not worse, abroad. We do not wonder that he needed God's help in his utter chaos of body and soul; some angel-hand sent first to bake him a cake, as like Elijah, he lay under his juniper-tree, and so to begin the refreshing that would end in the still small voice of a divine solacement to his wearied spirit. Then came the study of the language, during which he rode twelve miles to get a teacher's help. The sick, solitary man, had indeed a stern beginning, and for long little or no fruit.

Still he persevered. Meanwhile he shifted his field of work to the Susquehannah river (musical with the rhythm of its own waters and the poetry of Thomas Campbell) and the Forks of the Delaware, not far from Philadelphia. As he went on he had more success. His, too, was the grand motto which Eliot wrote on his at last completed Indian Grammar, "Prayer and pains, through faith in Jesus Christ, will do anything," and Eliot's experience was often Brainerd's in his hardest times, "God steps in and helps me." It is a curious fact that being in ignorance of the language,

and employing an interpreter, so long as the interpreter was a heathen no good followed, but the moment he felt as a Christian the words he spoke, immediately deep impressions were made. The sympathy of the speaker helped to make the Word of God quick and powerful.

His last and most successful work, however, was at Croswoksung. There he spoke from the simplest gospel texts. He saw that the more he preached on the love of Christ the more the Indians were moved and won. They despised all terror, knowing fear neither of God nor of man, but they melted under love. Often those men, who could brave death without a tear, sobbed, and strange floods of weeping came from their hearts, moved by the marvellous love of the Great Spirit who had come to save them. But Brainerd not only exhorted, he catechised, and lodged the Shorter Catechism in the minds of those wild Mohawks and Iroquois. He knew that in the swampy ground of these Indian minds solid massive piles of doctrine must be fixed if any great and lasting building was afterwards to rise. We trace him, in his private journal, still wrestling for himself and his dear hearers before God, and thence from behind the veil coming forth bearing to them the blood of atonement and the blessings of intercession. A great work was done among them. Many were convinced, converted, and baptized; and long years of brave, renewed lives often showed how the vices of the Indian had passed away, while his fine native qualities had been grafted into Christ.

Even though no such token from the Master had been given to gladden his heart, such a life as that of

Brainerd is never lost. The yearning soul, with all its sombre melancholy, had its hours of celestial gladness. Moreover, since that life has been laid open to all in its most secret passages, it has been alike the inspiration of the earnest and the rebuke of the careless. "The mill-streams that turn the wheels of the world," says one, "rise in solitary places." In no more solitary place could this well of living water have been gathered than in the American forest, or the deeper forest of Brainerd's spirit; and few streams have moved to finer issues, more saintly souls, than the sad, sweet outpourings of his journal. We give, to represent both parts of his work, its two last entries: "Spent the day in overseeing and directing the Indians about mending the fence around their wheat. Towards night, was able to walk out and take care of the Indians again. In the evening, enjoyed a very peaceful frame." Here is his very last interview with his flock: "About ten o'clock I called my people together, and after having explained and sung a psalm, I prayed with them. There was a considerable deal of affection among them; I doubt not, in some instances, that which is more than merely natural."

What an unpretending close to a work in its real qualities so sublime—diligent about a fence for the wheat of his poor Indians—and in some quiet last words folding his few sheep once more under the Great Shepherd's care!

Now he was altogether exhausted, and came to Northampton, and to the home of Jonathan Edwards, to die. The departure, as is usual in cases of consumption, came with slow steps. But never was his spirit more quick in its grasp and more full in its

gladness. The breath around him in that home was all he needed. There were sympathy, high conversation, and prayer with the great thinker and saint, who, when he was a stranger, took him in; and there was also, what must have been an unspeakable solace to the man who had lived alone in the forest seven years, the young daughter of Edwards, Jerusha, whom he loved, and whom he had betrothed. The noble face of Jonathan Edwards would calm and elevate his spirit; the tender face of his daughter, eighteen years old, would be as life from the dead to his heart. These open wicket-gates of human love made easier the full entrance into the divine love. He leaned on the Beloved indeed. He was constantly uttering words such as these: "Had I a *thousand souls*, if they were worth anything, I would give them all to God; but I have nothing to give when all is done." "There is nothing in the world worth living for but doing good and finishing *God's work*, doing the work that Christ did." "My heart goes out to the burying-place; but oh! to glorify God, that is it; that is alone all." We need not linger on the ever-renewed joy. If there was in other days the sublime monotony of melancholy, as Robert Hall called it, there is now the more sublime monotony of transport; if aforetime he did business on the great waters, now he has all but entered the calm haven. At last, on October 9th, 1747, he passed away *in pace* and *in pacem*.

He was only twenty-nine years of age—the age also at which M'Cheyne, who resembled him in other and more important points, died. He had fulfilled a great life in a brief time. As William Arnot once said to me, God sometimes takes His greatest saints

early to Himself, as the photographer puts the prepared plate a few moments before the light till the impression of the face is fully stamped; then removes it suddenly to a dark room, and by and by brings it out in the sight of all a finished likeness. So the image of the Lord, stamped on a youthful soul, early taken away, abides alone, and no change of after years breaks its oneness or mars its perfection. A Brainerd dying at twenty-nine has a spiritual charm which would have faded away from a Brainerd dying at seventy.

We remember well sitting on his tomb, in that "burying-place to which my heart goes out," as he said. It was the morning of a Sabbath, May 31, 1863. The wide American continent was in the very middle of the storm of its civil war; but the churchyard was lonely and hushed as when its fir-trees waved in the old Indian forest, and was transfigured in the early summer into all the glory of an Italian morning. Other names, well known in America, were inscribed around. But two names gleamed forth—that of David Brainerd, on his altar-shaped tomb, moss-grown and fir-shaded; and that of Jerusha Edwards, who died six months after him, on the little headstone close beside it. Next to the grave of Jonathan Edwards, in Princeton, these two graves filled me most with thoughts full of the pathos of human and of the sublimity of Divine love; thoughts that abide in the heart and linger in the memory when now the loud march of regiments in the streets and the hushed line of the wounded in the hospitals are willingly forgotten. That great civil war ended in the emancipation of four million slaves. It achieved a noble work, and it cost

immense sacrifices. But even its work did not rise to the purity and elevation of that which made Brainerd a nobler soldier than any in the whole army, and its sacrifices were surpassed by the self-denials of his soul, with its sterner struggles, and the sufferings of his body, with its daily dying.

## X.

*ROBERT BURNS.*

WE are this evening to bring before you the story of Robert Burns. It is nearly eighty-five years \* since he was laid in his Dumfries grave, and 122 years since he was born in the “auld clay biggin” near Ayr. There must be much worth in that man, to whose influence years have added, and whose name a few years ago was the magic word that united thousands of hearts all the world over. We shall not forestall the varied feelings which his genius and his character suggest, but allow these to rise up naturally and with inspiring or warning power as the story proceeds.

On the 25th January 1759, in that clay-built and thatched cottage on the banks of the Doon near Alloway Kirk, Burns was born. Though the home was humble enough, his father and mother were most admirable specimens of the Scotch character. William Burns, his father, came from the north-east of Scotland, and from a gardener of a nursery of seven acres had become a farmer of one hundred acres. From every account given by his family and others who knew him well, he was a remarkable man, a great reader, a constant thinker, fond of discussion. Grave in character,

\* This lecture was last delivered in 1881.

rendered graver still by a constant battle with a barren farm and an exacting landlord ; a man of deep insight into character, thoroughly devout and pious in life ; add to these features, warm affections, stubborn sturdy habits, and you have the father of our poet. Hundreds of such men have lived, and still live, as great in character and power of mind as many who have become famous, because of a readier and more exalted power of expressing their thoughts, or some public opportunity of making their character renowned by their deeds. The sister of Burns, Mrs. Begg, who died a few years ago, spoke of him (in a conversation I had with her) with a reverence that sixty years had not lessened upon her real feelings to her father. She wondered people did not make as much of him as they did of her brother. A girl of twelve when he died, she used to read constantly to him in the declining period of his health which preceded his death. Up to the end he had never made a song. Burns' mother, again (who sung with fine feeling), gave him a love of song and her own look, especially those eyes which glowed like chamber-lamps on a dark night. The daughter told me, when an invalid, she grew very quiet, and had always in her bed three books : Boston's "Fourfold Estate," "Pilgrim's Progress," and the Bible. She kept by these ; they were her old favourites, and they were her last.

It was of such a father and mother that our poet was born. It is generally from such homes that men of great mark come. Whatever seeds of latent God-given power may be in the mind, the kindly influences of such an upbringing foster them into blade and bud, while the daily toil, and often painful struggle

for bread, when they do not depress, excite courage and patience, out of which comes manly independence. There are many things in Burns which he drew from other sources, but what he did bring from the home of his father was a boon which gives his genius passport to all hearts, his keen insight, unshrinking manliness, and warm sympathy for labour and sorrow. Besides his father and his mother there was an old woman residing in the family, Jenny Wilson by name, who poured into his young ears all sorts of tales and songs concerning ghosts, fairies, brownies, witches, &c. But his mind was put under more regular training. William Burns had a determination to give his children a good education. Burns, of course, learned to read, and his two first books were "The Lives of Hannibal" and "Sir William Wallace." The first kindled a martial enthusiasm in him; but he says, "The tales of Wallace poured a tide of Scottish prejudice in my veins which will boil along them until the flood-gates of life shut in eternal rest." As the years proceeded, he read all the books his father had bought or borrowed for their common use. Such books were strong nourishing food for his mind, storing up in it information, and exciting it to reflection and feeling. There were *The Spectator*, "Pope," and Pope's "Homer;" some plays of Shakespeare, Locke on "The Human Understanding," Harvey's "Meditations," the works of Allan Ramsay and Smollett, and a collection of songs. These books young Burns read eagerly, for "no book," says his most worthy and intelligent brother Gilbert, "was so voluminous as to slacken his industry, or so antiquated as to damp his enthusiasm." The collection of songs was a great

favourite. "That volume," says Burns himself, "was my *vade mecum*. I pored over them during my work or walking to labour, song by song, verse by verse, carefully noting what was tender or sublime from what was affectation or fustian; and I am convinced I owe to this practice most of my critic craft, such as it is." Throw in here a competent knowledge of French and a little knowledge—very little, to be true—of Latin, and you have the book-learning of Burns in his sixteenth year.

I am sure very few minds at school or college have had such an education as Burns had. It was a true education in contrast to instruction. Not the piling in of facts on the mind, but the drawing out of faculties from the mind. That is training, education, development. Some one has said there is a perfect statue in every block of marble, if we only knew how to hew and dig it out; and no doubt there are powers and true capabilities in each soul, which, if rid of the surrounding matter, would appear noble and beautiful. Still, books had here a Burns to read them. I do not believe that a library will make a genius, though a genius will be all the better for the library. The electric spark is not created by the lightning-rod; it only draws it out of its hidden place in the dark cloud. Burns' mental character worked on what he had read, and shaped it. One says well, "Our strength is measured by our plastic power." From the same material one man builds palaces, another hovels; one warehouses, another villas. Bricks and mortar are mortar and bricks until the architect can make them something else; the block of marble which was an obstacle for the faltering and weak, becomes a stepping-

stone on the pathway of the strong. All these books guided the mind of Burns, but especially that collection of songs. With the wonderful instinct of a natural tendency, upon these he fastened; they formed the first mould into which his mind ran, and there it ran till the latest hour of his life. As I look on that awkward, swarthy, dark-eyed country ploughboy conning over these old lays of Scotland, feeling their beauty and power passing over into his own soul, and at the same time carefully criticising their words and music, I see thus afar off the poet-singer whose "Man's a Man for a' that" and "Highland Mary" sound through our hearts like a trumpet-blast or the wail of a lute or æolian harp.

The scenery around Burns acted invisibly on him. No common light of the earth and sky was in his feelings in the morning as he went at his work, or amid the pathos of gloaming; and as he returned in the splendours of the setting sun and starry skies, these addressed themselves to an eye that first felt their wonderful power, and then gradually learned to spell them out into sacred writing till its meaning dawned upon and lighted up all his mind. Everything in Burns reminds us of the open air and free earth, as in reading Scott's writings we feel the words are the opening of a door that lets us into the midst of nature.

All the while Burns was a grave-looking lad; a stubborn, sturdy something in his disposition hindered him, as he thought and says, from being a favourite with anybody. His nature grew slowly and silently. Besides, there was much in his lot to make him prematurely thoughtful, and to check the natural current

of his gladness. His father's farm at Mount Oliphant was a cold wet soil, and required hard working to make anything of it. From his thirteenth year Robert had to toil upon it from morning to night; at fifteen he was the principal labourer on the farm, and relieved his father from holding the plough. Two years before he had assisted in thrashing the crops of corn. At this time he was constantly afflicted in the evenings with a dull headache, which, at a future period, was exchanged for a palpitation of heart. For a few weeks in his eighteenth year he went to a brother of his mother's to learn trigonometry. There he fell in with smugglers, and saw something of their lawless wild life; frequently at this period, as money was scarce with them, the factor would send them letters which threw the whole family into tears. Amidst such scenes Burns lived till he reached manhood. Unconsciously he was laying up the ore that was to be moulded by his sovereign genius into the current coin of his immortal work. His father, and his father's simply pathetic and sublime family worship, he had only to paint in all the colours of affection and reverence, and lo! there is hung up for ever this glorious picture of "The Cottar's Saturday Night." His mother's old lay lies in the cells of his memory, shaped in these tones of her who sang when he was a boy, and long years afterwards he reconstrues the old lay, passes it through the alembic of his own genius, and you have the tear-bedimmed elegy, "Man was made to Mourn;" the witch-stories of the old servant and the smuggler scenes in Carrick are fused together in the impetuous heat of his burning fancy, and lo! "Tam O'Shanter" glides forth from the dark night of

his brain into the morn of his ride regal. Hallowe'en came round once a year, and Burns gives it an imperishable record, though it has well-nigh died out from among the customs of the nation. Even the factor's threatening letters are remembered, and honest Luath in "The Twa Dogs" dooms the factor to sit for his portrait. It is important to mark these things, as showing that uncommon opportunities or scenes in character are not needed as materials out of which great works are to be made; so wonderful is common life, that it needs only to be seen in the light of genius, and men turn from conventionalities and glitter to the cottage and to the field-furrows, to the joys and sorrows of the heart, with the impression that here is power, because here is nature. That is a universal rule. Let a man be true to his opportunities, and these are enough. That is another interesting point in this preparatory stage which carries with it a great lesson. Burns was all this time fitting himself for his future work and fame, just as in Sir Walter Scott's life we read of Border raids on horseback, his visiting all the old castles and streams, his living in farm-houses. All these incidents came out at last in his poems and novels. As a companion in these excursions said afterwards to him, "He was makin' himsel' a' the time, tho' he maybe didna' ken o't." So it was with Burns. During that seven years from his thirteenth to his twentieth, when his life, as he says, was as the cheerless gloom of a hermit, and the unceasing toil of a galley slave, he was still learning something of that fierce indignation against tyranny and those sombre repinings over the lot of poverty and toil in contrast with that of wealth and

leisure. He was at the same time storing up the materials which his genius was afterwards to build up in poetry. It is thus with the mind as it is with our earth. Long ago trees fell in the mighty primeval forest and became hard as stone. But now men dig them up and touch them with fire, and the old trees become living again, and light up our hearths and cheer our homes. So facts and scenes once living, but long ago buried, lie shapeless and dark till genius, with memory for a miner, digs them up and touches them with fire till they light up and warm thousands of homes.

But it was not in the nature of Burns not to express what was in him. The secret of his own powers was at last discovered to him, and in the following way:—“You know our country custom of coupling a man and a woman together as partners in the labours of harvest. In my fifteenth autumn my partner was a bewitching creature, a year younger than myself. My scarcity of English denies me the power of doing her justice in that language; but you know the Scottish idiom—she was a bonnie, sweet, sonsie lass. In short, she, altogether unwittingly to herself, initiated me in that delicious passion, which, in spite of acid disappointment, gin-horse prudence, and bookworm philosophy, I hold to be the first of human joys, our dearest blessing here below! How I caught the contagion I cannot tell; you medical people talk much of infection from breathing the same air, the touch, &c., but I never expressly said I loved her. Indeed, I did not know myself why I liked so much to loiter behind with her when returning in the evening from our labours; why the tones of her voice made my heart-strings thrill like an *Æolian* harp; and particularly why my pulse beat

such a furious rattan when I looked and fingered over her little hand to pick out the cruel nettle-stings and thistles. Among her other love-inspiring qualities, she sang sweetly; and it was her favourite reel to which I attempted giving an embodied vehicle in rhyme. I was not so presumptuous as to imagine that I could make verses like printed ones, composed by men who had Greek and Latin; but my girl sang a song which was said to be composed by a small country laird's son on one of his father's maids, with whom he was in love; and I saw no reason why I might not rhyme as well as he; for, excepting that he could smear sheep and cast peats, his father living in the moorlands, he had no more scholar-craft than myself."

It was shortly after the family had removed to Moss-giel, near Mauchline, that Burns, to help matters—for here again they were unfortunate—went to Irvine to learn the trade of a flax-dresser. He was now about twenty-three, and these were the first six months he spent from under his father's roof. Up to this time, he himself assures us, he had lived virtuously; however his mind might be perplexed by poverty or wearied by toil, his conscience had no great stain upon it. But now he learned two things that often go together—he learned to sin and he learned to doubt; a young soutar and other like companions helped him on his downward way. I mark it the more strongly, as the Irvine residence, though brief, had an immense influence on the man's after career and the poet's future writings. Conscience, or at least deep respect for a father's example and instruction, or both, had kept Burns' passions in check; but now began to make its appearance that constant

conflict of conscience with passion that makes us sad amidst all our pride, and forces upon us, amidst our most unrestrained admiration for the successes of his genius, a most poignant sense of the immense failure of his character. I am not here wantonly to point the finger of scorn at a great mind's degradation, or in narrow-mindedness to forget his temptations and his misery, but in proportion to our appreciation of the wonderful power of his writings is our sorrow, that comes over the mind and at last settles down upon it, as we mark step after step the tragedy of Burns' life. If I wanted any antidote against the worse part of Burns' poems and character, I should need to go no farther than the kind but candid study of Burns' life, dragged down to a degradation far beneath his genius, and to a death too early for his years. It is true, and this should not be forgotten, that there was something in Burns' gifts that needed to be watched against, else the vivid flashes of his passionate imaginative genius would overbear reason and conscience. "Certain of God's great gifts," says Burney, "such especially as distinguished David, are often associated with such susceptibility as expose to more than ordinary trial." Nothing can be an excuse or apology for him, yet by God's means it may be turned to account, and made to produce the opposite to itself. To some men's errors the world has been indebted for the richest lessons and ripest fruit. In the condition of things a quick sensibility to physical impressions is often associated with a moral elevation and with a living conscience, infinite memory, and ceaseless will. Such persons are dear unto God, having

tasted of His grace and yet tarnished their garments. Then burning shame, bitter tears, prostrate humiliation, settled sorrow, and new hope render them often the most memorable instructors. Hence many of David's Psalms. Much of what Burney has said about David can be said about Burns.

Perhaps no two men in the world have written songs that are so taking; sometimes in their passionate earnestness torn out of their heart. Both men, the one in the king's robes and the other in the ploughman's frock, had hearts of almost the same mould. Both, too, sinned deeply, and sinned in the same manner, and both had bitter remorse. But David rose up, obtained freedom, and, though with wasted heart and tear-dimmed eye, again walked peacefully before God and man. With Burns we find misery enough, for he was too noble a being not to see whence he had fallen. His deep sorrow is his lofty inspiration revealed. But, alas! the misery sometimes hardened his heart to more sin, and sometimes made him laugh the louder and drink the deeper to drown despair, if sometimes it made him pray with bitter tears and read the Bible with earnest inquiry; but how much more, God, who reads the heart, only can tell. His own epitaph on himself is at once his severest condemnation. He who reads it to purpose will understand Burns' errors to profit.

“Is there a whim-inspired fool,  
Owre fast for thought, owre hot for rule,  
Owre blate to seek, owre proud to snool?  
Let him draw near;  
And owre this grassy heap sing dool  
And drap a tear.

Is there a bard of rustic song  
 Who, noteless, steals the crowds among  
 That weekly this area throng ?

O pass not by !

But, with a frater-feeling strong,  
 Here heave a sigh.

Is there a man whose judgment clear  
 Can others teach the course to steer,  
 Yet runs himself life's mad career

Wild as the wave ?

Here pause, and through the starting tear  
 Survey this grave.

The poor inhabitant below  
 Was quick to learn and wise to know,  
 And keenly felt the friendly glow,

And softer flame ;

But thoughtless follies laid him low,  
 And stained his name !

Reader, attend ! Whether thy soul  
 Soars Fancy's flights beyond the pole,  
 Or darkling grubs this earthly hole

In low pursuit,

Know, prudent, cautious self-control  
 Is wisdom's root."

But we must pass on, though the theme must come  
 in again and again in our lecture, as it did in his life.

On his return from Irvine, Burns settled down at  
 Mossgiel, a mile and a half from Mauchline. I re-  
 member my visit to that place, where Burns wrote  
 the poems that made him immortal. It is on a  
 bare upland, looking on one side far away over undu-  
 lating fields to Arran with its shattered peaks, and  
 on the other side to Loudon Hill, at whose foot, in  
 the fields of Drumclog, the Covenanters struck a

glorious blow for liberty. It is a very ordinary farmstead. The good woman of the house took me up to the little garret-room (with a single pane of glass in the roof), fit to hold only a bed, a table, and one chair, where Burns penned at intervals of labour the lines he had composed while holding the plough, wandering in the woods or along the fields. From that little room went forth those works whose dominion is now wide as the world, from America's western backwood and Australia's far eastern bush. I plucked a daisy also from the field where his plough had turned up the one he has immortalised and set as a star in the firmament by poetry, and in another field I marked the spot where the mouse had fled before him.

It was in this upland farm, amidst its ungrateful toils, having £7 a year for his personal expenses, while he worked hard day by day from spring to winter—it was here, and during the four years of his residence here, Burns grew up into the perfect nature of his genius, and flung forth with lavish hand the rich treasures of his genius. Nor was this done without much careful reflection. In his Memorandum Book we see him carefully studying his former favourite writings, from the standard English writers to the old minstrels of Scotland, that he might learn the art of writing and serving his apprenticeship to the craft of composition. Time after time he walked forth by himself, sometimes in the storm, that he might listen to the roar of the wind through the planting, or down the river-side, that, amidst the secret gentle scenes of nature, his soul might be mellowed into her own tenderness.

All his senses were responsive to the sights and sounds around him. "I have," he said when life was

darkening, "some favourite flowers in spring, among which are the mountain daisy, the harebell, the foxglove, the wild brier and rose, the budding birch, or hoary hawthorn; these I view and hang over with tender delight. I never hear the loud solitary whistle of the curlew in a summer noon, or the wild cadence of a troop of grey plover in an autumnal morning, without feeling an elevation of soul like the enthusiasm of devotion or poetry."

He gives a description of his own feelings when the Muse Colia thus addresses him—

“ I saw thee seek the sounding shore,  
Delighted with the dashing roar ;  
Or when the North his fleecy store  
Drove through the sky,  
I saw grim Nature’s visage hoar  
Struck thy young eye.

Or when the deep green-mantled earth  
Warm cherished every flow'ret's birth,  
And joy and music pouring forth  
                    In every grove,  
I saw thee eye the general mirth  
                    With boundless love.

When ripened fields and azure skies  
Called forth the reaper's rustling noise,  
I saw thee leave their evening joys,  
                    And lonely stalk,  
To vent thy bosom's swelling rise  
                    In pensive walk.

When youthful love, warm-blushing, strong,  
Keen-shivering shot thy nerves along,  
Those accents, grateful to thy tongue,  
Th' adorèd name,  
I taught thee how to pour in song,  
To sooth thy flame.

I saw thy pulse's maddening play  
Wild send thee Pleasure's devious way,  
Misled by Fancy's meteor ray,  
By Passion driven ;  
But yet the light that led astray  
Was light from Heaven."

But Burns was all the time deep in the study of human nature. In his Mauchline and Tarbolton debating societies he learned how to express himself. Their themes of discussion were not indeed so elevated and expansive as some of his own are. Here is a specimen of their topics. "Whether do we derive more happiness from love or friendship?" "Whether is a young man of common rank in life likeliest to be happy who has got a good education and a mind well improved, or he who has just got the education and information of those around him?"

The free discussion of such topics trained Burns to that manly and matchless flow of speech which all who knew him declared to be the most wonderful among the wonderful things about him. And not there only, but everywhere, his mind was active. At kirk and market, among talkers about farming, and bullocks, and talkers about New Lights and Old Lights, in the tavern and by the river-banks, in the peat-bog when cutting fuel, and around the fireside when at their meals, Burns' mind woke up and turned all into improvement. Hence that other side of the man's nature. He was not merely a passive or raptured admirer of nature, as Tannahill, but a strong-passioned man, full of benevolence and action.

Hence the wonderful range of Burns. His brain was full lobed and his heart had in it many chambers.

Vehement scorn, gentlest pity, overawed adoration, hot passion, the sharpest-edged epigram, and the broadest common sense—all were his. But now, on the eve of writing what was in him, there came the new element of sin, and with it alternate remorse and ridicule. As has been often the case with unregenerate men and passionate minds, deep inward sorrow has compelled the utterance of the heart. Shakespeare's "Hamlet," Dante's "Inferno," and David's Psalms prove this fact. It is to these elements, joined with his ambition and joy in the exercise of his ripening powers and the growing sense of his greatness, that we attribute the fact that while up to his twenty-sixth year he had written very little, and that little much inferior in matter and style, during the next fifteen months he poured out at one heat nearly all his great poems.

The farm of his mind yielded fruit of all study, and scarce a field but brought forth heavy crops.

These poems may be classed under seven or eight heads, so varied are they in their range.

1. The earliest of his long efforts was his scathing delivery on the Old Light ministers and opinions. In these Burns allowed himself the utmost latitude of expression. His religious principles were exceedingly unsettled; his character, he felt, was damaged; applause greeted him from many quarters; and the vehement pleasure of scourging his enemies—all these gave force to this series of compositions. Coarseness, profanity, wit, elegance, mingle together.

He used the flail most sturdily, and down came the blow, no matter where it landed, resounding. Even Burns himself, in later years, did not care to speak or hear much about these pieces. They raised up many

enemies; they committed him to the side of the profane and irreligious. They might unmask some hypocrites, but they threw a shield over many blackguards. Satire is a useful weapon at times, but in the hands of Burns it was like the restorer of some great painting; while he removes the dust that hides its beauty, he has well-nigh blotted out the matchless painting itself.

2. Then come his humorous pieces. Satire slides into humour. Different in their style, you have the satirically humorous in that extraordinary poem, "Death and Dr. Hornbook," the kindly humour in "The Twa Dogs," and the quaintly superstitious humour in the "Address to the Deil."

"The Twa Dogs" is a gem. Such dogs as Cæsar and Luath, dogs who could talk to oneself, and so kindly, might well, after such a natural dialogue, really part, as Burns has told us they did—

"When up they gat and shook their lugs,  
Rejoic'd they werena men but dogs;  
An' each took aff his several way,  
Resolv'd to meet some other day."

But of all his humorous pieces, the "Jolly Beggars" is the most extraordinary. The only thing that redeems it from total repudiation is that kindly spirit that makes us love man even in his lowest estate. So far that is well; but the "Jolly Beggars" has another side, which Burns knew well, in poverty, degradation, shame, and death.

4. Passing from that side, we journey through to the opposite side of Burns' genius. It is like going from east to west with variety and element.

The humorous has in it an element of affection, else it would be only biting and bitter satire. It is something between the vinegar of satire and the wine of love and devotion. Here Burns' songs start up; they are the flowers of his epics. As in religious poetry, so in secular, the epics are the most difficult. How few good hymns are there! The Bible has only one David; it has many historians, prophets, letter-writers. Scotch literature has only one Burns; it has many writers in other departments. For what is a hymn? It must hold in itself the highest truth, the deepest feeling, the finest imagery, the sweetest and most stirring music, and that in the circle of a very few lines. So with a song; it must be truthful, passionate, to fill the eye with its image and the ear with its music, and it must be short.

Burns is eminent as a song-writer. The one passion raging at the time, truthful and not affected, inspires his song, tinges all nature with its colour, and floats it along with its simple music. To take illustrations from the songs written at other times. What a war-blast, worthy of Bruce and Bannockburn, worthy of Burns too, and more cannot be said, except worthy of liberty and patriotism, is "Scots wha ha'e!" What a manly independence rings down the groove of every line of "A Man's a Man for a' that!" The highest-felt gratitude is due to Burns for revealing his own heart in that exquisitely elastic song, "Of a' the airts the wind can blaw." Can we ever exhaust our gratitude to the man who makes the dead start up from memory into the light of renewed affection, and the long-departed companion of our youth to come again to our side as in boyhood's days, as is done

in "Auld Langsyne?" But we pause. Each of these songs and many others have crowned Burns poet-laureate in the human heart and linked his memory to those great foremost feelings of mankind that last from generation to generation, through all classes and conditions, and flash from the pole to the equator.

5. Confining ourselves to that glorious fifteen months of overflowing productiveness, we pass from the manly yet tender love embalmed in his songs to that high and sublime theme of pure and reverential sentiment which will live for all time as "The Cottar's Saturday Night." It was in a lofty hour that Burns rose to this height. As Byron says of himself, so he might have said of Burns; had he kept his spirit to that height, he had been happy. But the clay will sink the spark immortal. The essence of a thousand such scenes are distilled into this short but gifted poem. It is his father, but recently dead, again comes up before him—his weary toil, his spade, his mattock, his hoes, his gleaming hearth crowned with love of wife and children; and his the hands that had held the instruments of sore toil, and his the heart that had rejoiced in the sweet comforts of the home fireside, and who takes reverent hold of the "big ha' Bible" and rises in affectionate, adoring love to the home of Divine joy, where the fire is never quenched and the circle is never broken. Oh! how that song of praise rises up as incense to Heaven, and carries with it the hearts of those who sing. The cottage is turned into a temple of the Most High. It is none other than the House of God—it is the Gate of Heaven! Such a scene, passing from the pure flame of lofty

devotion down to the genial, innocent, light of kindly humour, lived so deeply in Burns, his poems flow out so naturally, that we are lifted ere we are aware from the gloomy walk or the fireside greetings to glance into the very presence of God. Such a poem does honour to the genius of Burns; it has done more than a thousand marble monuments to keep in affectionate remembrance the character of Burns. Of all his poems it is the one we could the least spare. It is the best reply to his own satires; it is an undying monument to the ancestral piety of Scotland; it dignifies honest toil more than a thousand even of his surpassing songs about rank and character; and whilst it makes us mourn over his fall, all the deeper it reminds us that if Burns wrote only one "Cottar's Saturday Night," he must have felt and loved it thousands of times.

6. Nearly allied to this poem is his exquisitely pathetic poetry. The room of the village-tavern is hushed, the noisy laughter of boon companions has died like crackling thorns, and Burns comes with the morning to himself. Next day he is ploughing the fields, full of pensive thoughts and dark musings, when a mouse is startled from her nest in the ground. The poet stops, looks at his brother-mouse with as much sympathy as he had looked upon his brother-man. The poet, the more he is a poet, passes out of himself into all other beings, animate and inanimate. Scientific theories and definitions are nothing to him; a sympathetic circle surrounds him—the star in the firmament, the daisy in the field, the wild, angry storm, and the gentle whispering breeze, from God on His throne, down to all His creatures. What an

exquisitely truthful and original poem ! And so, again, in the poem to the daisy.

7. Going further into another sphere, his Poetical Epistles show a fine heartiness, his own determined, stubborn independence, and his eager search for genuine friendship. Listen to the stirring words in his “ Epistle to Davie.”

8. We pass by his poems which are mainly descriptive, though these show his minute observation of nature and his power in drawing her portrait, and mark only one other kind of poems—those that mark his strong common sense ; and as he speaks in these in his own person, you see the true workings of his mind. Every young man ought to have by heart his celebrated “ Epistle to a Young Friend.”

Such, then, are the eight or nine various kinds of poetical subjects that Burns treated. He could play on nearly every string of the human heart, from wildest fun to loftiest and purest adoration. But what they are in variety is less interesting than what they are in quality and character. What, after all, is the secret of Burns’ power?—the common quality which stamps what belongs to nature, the theme?—“ The Cottar’s Saturday Night ” or Tam O’Shanter’s midnight ride, with its Burns’ mark ? I should say it is manliness. He is never the poet to the exclusion of the man. Had the man been more refined and more religious, we should have been spared much indecency and irreligion, and we should have had a better man. Nevertheless it is this that marks his poems. In fact, Burns himself, and not the books he read, the people he conversed with, his own soul, such as it was. When he saw a thing, he saw it

through and through, and with pen in hand he tells you exactly what he saw. What he felt, he felt with his whole heart, mind, soul, and strength.

Keen resolution, overwhelming sorrow, awestruck emotion, whatever the feeling might be, you had it as he had it, or rather as it had him. His book is Burns himself. Hence the best way to study his life is to take up his poems in chronological order. The opposite to Shakespeare in this, who never refers to himself, Burns is never tired referring to himself; and what is more, he never tires his readers. For as Burns shows himself a man, few men ever covered a larger area of humanity than Burns. His sympathy spreads wide and deep, and in every opening of his heart he is opening the heart of humanity. His works have thus no professional look about them. He wrote because he was possessed by the demiurgic force of his ideas and impulses, and they carried him whithersoever they listed. The whole moves as by a vital influence from within. One or two strokes, and you have the daisy, the river-bank, the mouse, the man, the landscape. How effortless everything in Burns seems! He passes at once from the human heart to the heart of nature, puts a body upon his feeling, and a soul into the scene around, making the one visible, the other spiritual. Such was his genius, the power of seeing right into the heart of things, and by virtue of his intense sympathy entering into their very being, that when he spoke, it was the thing itself that spoke, and not another.

Hence the electric unexpected flashing from theme to theme and from object to object.

It is very wonderful, and more so when you consider

the means Burns had at his command. Demosthenes and Plato had that almost perfect instrument of expression, the Greek. Shakespeare and Milton played a many octaved organ, the English tongue. Whatever feeling they experienced, there stood a ready instrument to interpret it and publish it abroad. But Burns had only the limited, though, in its sphere, intensely expressive, range of the Lowland Scotch language. He had no Goliath's spear and buckler, but only those David's stones from a brook; no curiously-wrought and well-adapted armour of the Philistine champion, but only the Samson-like jaw-bone of an ass. But with that vehicle of thought and feeling he wrought marvels. It had indeed the same power which every dialect has to those who know how to use it. Our old Scotch Doric is a fit representation of the Scotch Saxon character. It has words hard as granite and soft as tears; it has expressions that lay bare character quaint and forcible; and it has expressions that speak love and pathos in tones that naturally belong to them. Take these two words, *pawkie* as the one, and *glowering* as the other, and where will you find better in their different departments?

The era of Shakespeare, Milton, Spenser, Bacon, and Jeremy Taylor was long gone by. Literature in the hands of Pope and his school had sunk into a clever description of civilised life. Other poems had indeed come close to nature. Such exquisite works as Gray's "Elegy," Beattie's "Minstrel," Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," and Collins' "Odes" prove that the electric fire had not altogether disappeared; but it came at rare intervals and in feeble shocks. It was reserved for Burns in Scotland and Cowper in England to inaugu-

rate a new era, to bring back poetry to the human heart, to the common earth and sky, to the simple and fervent language of daily life. Strange to say, both poets appeared about the same time. Cowper appeared in November 1785, and Burns' poems, in their first edition, in November 1786. How different these men, yet in many things how like ! Both loved Nature in her common moods ; both had sly wit and slashing sarcasm ; both wrote on the same lines in their poems ; both differed much, but from different causes ; both died under a cloud, though of far different character — Cowper, with his shrinking sensibilities and his despairing piety ; Burns, with his impulsive sociality and his turbid remorse. Yet " The Task " is not so different from " The Cottar's Saturday Night " and the " Holy Fair." The two most famous comic pieces are the rides of John Gilpin and Tam O'Shanter ; the last written pieces are drawn out of the same deep fountains of personal sorrow !

These, however, whatever may be their likeness or difference, were the men who regenerated English and Scotch literature. Cowper preceded, and did something to prepare the way for, Coleridge, Byron, and others. Burns had much hand in the impulse given to Scott and Allan Cunningham. Hogg and Tannahill drew directly from him.

But we return to the personal history. During those months of poetical power in which Burns poured out in molten masses the contents of his soul, he had been fearfully disquieted. The intense action of his mind in composition when in the grasp of his private bitterness, soothed him ; but in the vacant hour the fruits he had to eat from the things whereof he

was ashamed was bitter indeed, Callous, indeed, Burns never was. Had he been, we could have had no heart to write on him. Self-indulgent he was one hour, but self-remorseful the next; and the effect of his conduct with Jean Armour, whom he had exposed to a parent's wrath and a neighbourhood's shame, made him determine to leave Scotland and become a plantation worker or a negro-driver in Jamaica. It was a gloomy season during which he prepared to leave the land so dear to him by every association. But to pay his passage-money he resolved to publish his poems. They appeared in the year 1786 in Kilmarnock, and brought him twenty pounds and the applause of the country-side. The gloomy night that was gathering fast burst into a day of fame and hope. Jamaica was abandoned, and Edinburgh was now his destination. There he went to publish a second edition of his poems. As he went he hummed to himself an old verse—

“As I came in by Glenap,  
I met an aged woman,  
And she bade me cheer up my heart,  
For the best of my days were coming.”

It is interesting to mark in the lot of men that when the night is darkest some incident sent by God rolls all their path into sunshine. The accidental discovery of the first manuscript sheets of “Waverley,” written ten years before and laid aside for ever, determined Scott on finishing it, and originated that immortal set of prose poems, the “Waverley Novels.” The discovery of the Bible changed Luther's whole life. But the instances are too many to enumerate.

Here was a new turning-point in Burns' life. It brought him suddenly into the midst of renown and rank. Three weeks ago he was skulking for fear of a jail, his chest on the way to Greenock, and a steerage passage taken out for the West Indies. Now he hands down duchesses to dinner, and sits a peer among the peers of fortune, learning, and taste in the old capital of Scotland. It was a severe test for any man, and Burns stood it well. He had in his lonely garret gauged his powers, and had formed an estimate of his productions. He had a natural self-respect and a fearless independence; and so, when he came to converse with men like Dugald Stewart, Dr. Robertson, Dr. Blair, Henry Mackenzie, Henry Erskine, he felt, and made them feel, that he was every whit their equal, and in many points, by natural endowment, their superior. His conversation, those admirable judges declared, was the most wonderful thing about him. Flashes of wit mingled with throbs of pathos, broad and keen views of human nature with wild, kindling enthusiasm, and all expressed in a style so vigorous, that they felt the poems, so far from exhausting his genius, were only the smallest part of it.

This Ayrshire ploughman and peasant was a phenomenon, who, while his patrons took him out to fashionable circles, and trotted him out to show his paces, made them feel that he was taking their measure, and was never abashed or absurdly clownish in their company. There he sat among them with his farmer-like frame, his thick black hair, his glowing eyes, his dark, swarthy complexion, his firm-set lips, his whole look of manhood and genius. But besides the great and

the fashionable he had other companions, and many not of the best sort. He had taken that strong city, Edinburgh, but he could not rule himself. The fire of genius was too often laid on the altar of drinking. About this time he says, "I know not how it is. I find I can win *liking*, but not *respect*." It was very plain how it was. Amidst his brilliant displays and warm affections he wanted a great self-guiding principle. Indeed, Carlyle says in the memoir of his life, that up to the day of his death he never grew to manhood in taste. He was seeking pleasure, and was discontented with his position. A man supported by religion would have despised that round of sensuality, and would have maintained, without constantly asserting, his independence.

One other most interesting incident in Burns's stay in Edinburgh was one to which it is probable he never recurred. Among all the men he met, he little knew a young boy, then fifteen years old, was destined to be the greatest. Sir Walter Scott has given an account of his meeting with Burns. It is preserved in Lockhart's valuable account of their first and last meeting.

The Edinburgh *furor* passed away. Burns returned to Mossgeil with £600 in his pocket, £200 of which he gave to his brother Gilbert and the family. His mother, as he stepped in upon the family circle after the Edinburgh fame, could say nothing more than "O Robert!"

After another idle winter in Edinburgh, which did him no good, in 1788 he settled down at Ellisland, a farm six miles from Dumfries, on the banks of the Nith. He had married Jean Armour at last; he had

a few hundred pounds at his disposal, and he had a fairer chance than most of prosperity in life. He knew in what happiness consisted, and knew he had its elements. And so again he resolved: "I have all along hitherto, in the warfare of life, been bred to arms among the light horse, the picquet-guards of fancy, among the hussars and Highlanders of the brain; but I am firmly resolved to sell out of these giddy battalions. Cost what it will, I am determined to buy in among the grave squadrons of heavy-armed thought, the artillery corps of solid contrivance."

He was now in his thirtieth year, and many bright years seemed to be before him. But it was difficult for any man, much more for Burns, to settle down to plodding for even weeks, after his months of brilliant idleness and vagrant fancies. Accordingly he was wayward to settle down to his farm. The old proved farmer is the best farmer. He had made a bad choice in his farm; it was miserably stubborn, and what it did produce was not worth much. It had many fine walks and views, but no good acres. He felt it was a poet's haunt rather than a farmer's. So again in a few months he added to the farming a gauger's employment, with ten parishes to look after. "I am now," says he, "a poor rascally gauger, condemned to gallop two hundred miles every week." But as a reason he adds proudly and gaily—

"I ha'e a wife and twa wee laddies,  
They maun ha'e brose and brats o' duddies;  
Ye ken yoursel my heart right proud is;  
But I'll sned besoms, threw saugh woodies,  
Before they want."

The twofold charge over his barren acres and his

smuggling friends was too much. It took him from home, led him to more joviality, and at last compelled him to retreat from Ellisland to Dumfries, there to live on his salary of £70 a year. We ask, and the question arises in every mind, Why did not the friends and patrons of Burns do more for him than a gaugership with £70 a year? Many answers may be given. What is everybody's business is nobody's business. The man who in life looks to public bodies of men doing him justice, much less being generous, will often find himself forlorn and penniless. Take twenty men, each with the kindest heart, and form them into a corporate body, and the corporate soul and conscience seems gone. Besides, Burns was "ower-blate to seek, ower-proud to snool." Samuel Johnson once pitched from him a new pair of shoes laid over-night at his lodging door for the use of the shoe-worn student; and Burns was as proud as Johnson. Very likely his bold bearing in Edinburgh had offended men who, had he been more deferential or less imperative, would have come forward to help him. But best reason of all, it was felt that it was difficult to help a man who could well help himself. A man of genius must study the multiplication-table and the rule of three. No fallacy is more pernicious than that your man of genius is privileged to be an idler or a spendthrift. It is a false principle—it is a fatal practice. The men of greatest genius have always been men of the greatest common sense. Shakespeare, Milton, and others testify to this. Alas! Burns did not need patronage; he needed something far better and surer in a time of danger and strait—he needed a prudent caution and self-control. Stern indeed is

the great moral law. Burns placed himself in opposition to it, and in the conflict he, as all must, came off beaten.

But after all, it was pitiful that Burns should have had no other opening made for him, and it could have been done if a true effort had been made. It is so too often. The man of genius, being poor, fights long, struggles with many difficulties, dies in impoverished obscurity; and then, when only the frail tenement that has been fretted to death is left, when the worn-out vesture of the imperishable spirit falls from it in decay or is torn off by disease, men waken up, accompany the body in thousands, shed tears over the grave—tears, a few of which, if shed over the living heart, had quenched many a sordid fear—and shout applause over the car of death, the slightest whisper of which would have called back the jaded and disappointed spirit to joy and hope. Oh! it is too often so in our narrow lives. The death that takes from us a friend quickens in us a sympathy over his struggles, and a tear for his excellences, which, if shown more frequently, might perhaps have kept him longer among us, and certainly have made our fellowship more close and generous.

But one lesson comes out here. Every man must be his own patron. Heart within and God overhead. “Commit thy ways unto the Lord, and He will bring it to pass. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord.”

During his stay at Ellisland, however, Burns had not been altogether idle. “*Tam O’Shanter*,” perhaps the very finest of Burns’ poems, does much to redeem him from that charge. Long simmering in his mind,

he poured it out in one day. Mrs. Burns says he was busily engaged in the morning in crooning to himself, and perceiving that her presence was an interruption, crouched with her little ones among the broom. The children were presently attracted by the strange and wild gesticulations of the bard. He was reciting very loud, and with tears rolling down his cheeks, those animated lines which he had just composed—

“Now, Tam, O Tam, had they been queans,  
A’ plump and strapping in their teens,”

and so forth. This was a great feat for one day. His Muse from beginning to end moves on without slackening speed, at a hot hand-gallop, without once drawing breath. Pegasus carried Burns through it as nobly as the mare Meg carried Tam himself all through that marvellous ride.

That noblest of his ballads, “To Mary in Heaven,” and that best of his drinking-pieces, “Willie Brewed a Peck o’ Maut,” belong to this period. An excellent man belonging to our congregation, now dead, had an uncle whose farm lay near to Ellisland. He often used to see Burns passing along the road on foot or horseback, a careless, slouching walker, and an ungainly rider, but noted for his deeply marked face, heavy and melancholy, and his large black flaming eyes.

These days, however, did not last long, and in 1791 he came into Dumfries. He came there with a sense of disappointment. His gaugership, which ranged from Caerlaverock Castle to Annan Water, led him into all companies, and when at home he was constantly exposed to the temptation of deep-drinking and late hours. Then he became through his enthu-

siasm, rashly displayed, a marked man, to be shunned by the friends of king and constitution ; and, last and worst, his habits sank lower and lower. It is a most painful history—

“’Twere long to tell and sad to trace  
Each step from splendour to disgrace ;  
Enough, no foreign foe could quell  
My soul, till from itself it fell.”

His genius never through these last years rose high or kept long on the wing ; song after song, however, showed that the light of poetry was only hidden. His very finest songs belong to this period. “ Scots wha ha’e ” and “ A Man’s a Man for a’ that,” and some 150 more, show that force and cunning were not departed from his right hand. Many a letter, too, full of glowing sublimity, bitter sarcasm, or manly comment, tell us what passed within.

At one time, when he was nearly shunned of all, a young friend met him on the shady side of the street, walking alone. He proposed to Burns to cross the street. “ Nay, nay, my young friend ; that will never do,” Burns said ; and then he quoted the old ballad—

“ His bonnet stood ance fu’ fair on his brow,  
His auld ane looked better than mony ane’s new ;  
But now he lets ’t wear ony gate it will hing,  
And casts himsel’ dowie upon the corn bing.  
Oh were we but young as ance we ha’e been,  
We should ha’e been galloping down on yon green  
And linking it ower the lily-white lea,  
And were nae my heart light I wad die.”

This was now his habitual mood. Long after he expressed it too truly in lines which were figured in

the life of Byron during the darkening down of his own days—

“When ance life’s day draws near the gloamin,  
Then fareweel vacant, careless roamin,  
And fareweel cheerfu’ tankards foamin,  
And social noise,  
And fareweel dear deluding woman,  
The joy of joys.”

Indeed, there is much in these last years that recalls those of Byron. Byron had not poverty to fight against, but that was not Burns’ great difficulty. For honest poverty he did not hang his head or break his heart. But both had exhausted the springs of life, and dragged down the nobler part of their nature till they wearied of life. But we shall not linger on this period. He had, in his own words, given away slice after slice of his constitution, till but little remained. He went to the Brow, on the shore of the Solway in Annandale. Professor Wilson says he had his Bible with him in his lodgings, and read it almost continually; and he expressed to a friend his deep contrition for having written some things he regretted, and mentioned that he rejected with horror the offer of £50, made when he was poor, by a miscreant who wished to publish them.

Fond of nature to the last, a young friend was about to let down the window-blinds to darken the room in which he lay, into which the sun shone brightly. Looking at her with great benignity, he said, “Thank you, my dear, for your kind attention; but do let him shine; he will not shine long for me.” And it was but a few days after, in his house in Dumfries, early in the morning of a beautiful July day, the

21st of the month, he closed those glowing eyes for ever on this earth he loved so well.

I have stood in that small upper room. I had stood in the room where, thirty-seven years before, he was born, and in that garret where, in the spring-time of his genius, he had written poem after poem ; but standing in that chamber of death awoke deeper and more varied feelings. On these I shall not enter—lessons I shall not draw ; for this lecture will have been in vain if it has not conveyed its own most impressive lesson by inference and deduction.

It is precisely in this part of our life that religion, and above all the Gospel, comes in with its cure for sin and sorrow. The problem and lesson of Burns' life are most incomplete and unsatisfactory unless we see how in these dark, downward times he thought of religion. Listen to the words he addressed in 1794 to a true-hearted friend. "Are you deep in the language of consolation ? I have exhausted in reflection every topic of consolation. Still there are two great pillars that bear us up amid the wreck of misfortune and misery. The one is composed of the different modifications of a certain noble, stubborn something in man, known by the names of courage, fortitude, magnanimity ; the other is made up of those feelings and sentiments which, however the sceptic may deny or the enthusiast disfigure them, are yet, I am convinced, great and component parts of the human soul—those *senses of the mind*, if I may be allowed the expression, which connect us with and link us to those awful realities, an all-powerful and equally beneficent God, and a world to come beyond death and the grave. The first gives the nerve to combat while a ray of hope

beams on the field ; the last pours the balm of comfort into the wounds which time can never cure." Some time before he had written to James Candlish (the father of Dr. Candlish), " I likewise, since you and I were first acquainted, in the pride of despising old women's stories, ventured on the daring path Spinoza trod ; but experience of the weakness, not the strength of human power, made me glad to grasp at revealed religion." Elsewhere he says, " From the sublimity, excellence, and purity of His doctrine and precepts, unparalleled by all the aggregated wisdom and learning of many preceding ages, though to appearance He was Himself the obscurest and most illiterate of our species, therefore Jesus was from God." We know that he had family worship regularly at Mossgiel and Ellisland, and if not that at Dumfries, on Sabbath evenings he catechised his children.

Such, as far as we know, were his religious thoughts and feelings. A man of essentially noble nature and warm affections, he felt even to madness the degradation of his passions and the estrangement of his fellows. It is sad enough to hear him speaking of buying a pocket copy of Milton, that he might study and fathom the pride of Satan. Angelic pride and animal passion, there you have the secret of Burns' sins ; aye, sin is always the cause of his sorrow. Such a lesson on the need of a Divine Atonement to bring peace, and Divine influence to supply power, when remorse rages and passion is in the ascendant, when misery beclouds and mirth bewitches the spirit, is not to be read every day. Far be it from me to pronounce on Burns or any man ; but our lecture on Burns will not be useless if along with the lessons of friend-

ship, patriotism, admiration of independence which his name recalls to his admirers—and who can fail to be such?—the sympathising heart has little of the spirit of Him who wept over sin which does not pity reverently, and yet truly learn the solemn truth that genius, while it may ennoble misfortune, can never supply the calm peace of innocence, and that applause can never be substituted for that grace of God which hath appeared unto men, and which teaches us that, denying ungodliness, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

Enough on this subject, yet not more than enough. Let the light of Burns' genius, while it shows us the height to which it raised him, show us also the rocks on which he foundered; and let us repeat his own earnest words, written as if he had anticipated the future sitting in judgment on him:—

“Then gently scan your brother man,  
 Still gentler sister woman;  
 Though they may gang a kennin wrang,  
 To step aside is human:  
 One point must still be greatly dark,  
 The moving why they do it;  
 And just as lamely can ye mark  
 How far, perhaps, they rue it.

Who made the heart, 'tis He alone  
 Decidedly can try us;  
 He knows each chord—its various tone,  
 Each spring—its various bias:  
 Then at the balance let's be mute,  
 We never can adjust it;  
 What's done we partly may compute,  
 But know not what's resisted.”

## XI.

*W. B. ROBERTSON, D.D.*

THIS day we and many with us are bereaved indeed ! Had this sad hour come fifteen years ago, as we greatly feared it would, this whole congregation would have felt, as it cannot now, a sense of loss in the removal of the noble man, the marvellous preacher, the tenderest of friends in joy and sorrow, the ever glancing wit, the genius, the man of God, the singular personality which, in its completeness, made him a position all his own in the Scottish pulpit, and one of the rarest men in all Scotland. But fifteen years have brought their changes. I am told that so rapid have they been that not many more than a hundred remain who remember him in the sweep and soaring of his power. With his death there rise up in many hearts here the departure of their dearest, to whom he, in this pulpit and in their homes, was very dear, and now at last the electric presence, the gleaming brilliance, the all-sympathising affection that touched and gladdened old and young, have passed away. There was no more remarkable man in Scotland of his day than William Robertson. Those who heard him but once, retain the record of a charm and thrill, strange and solitary in their experience ; and to those who knew him in deep passage of friendship, he can

never be replaced. Ere we part to our various lives from that face that shone in this place, let us take one lingering look at it once more, now darkening under the coffin lid. His life reached its 66th year, four years within the three score and ten, and had like most lives, especially of mark, its three stages of preparation, of work, of retreat from the old public toil, of bearing of deepening pain, that too, being a preparation on a higher plane for the work of the life where there is no death.

There were first his years of preparation up to his 23d year. Few men have had a more enriching training. His boyhood's home was far more than that of most a school of sense and piety and genius. All the neighbours around the farm of Greenhill, in the parish of St. Ninians, near Stirling, where he was born, went to consult his father, as men used of old to inquire of the oracle of God. He was one of those massive, grave natures, of few words and of much tenderness, which Scotland produced in large numbers. He bore deep marks of the far back spirit of independence which made the morass of Bannockburn, that lay beside his farm, the harvest field of national liberty; and higher still there was at the centre of his Christian nature the fervour of the old Secession piety, caught at its very hearth in Ebenezer Erskine's church in Stirling. With these central qualities were combined the modern breadth and discipline which only a college training gives. And his mother had the deep passion and music—sacred and inborn—which she gave to all her children, but gave in richest measure to her second son, William. That music, that finer spirit, often trembled under the weight of a nature too finely

touched. And if her son had in rare balance both spheres of emotion, and beginning from the pathos of the minor key seldom ended without reaching the major notes of hallelujah and triumph, still the dominating element of his intellectual and spiritual nature and make came from that gentle ethereal mother. This made his deepest nature lyrical, and lifted it into a higher rhythm. This was the leaven that leavened the three measures of his gifts—intellect, emotion, and action—and in greater breadth, and under a more varied culture, made his sermons, and poems, and prayers, and his whole life, the bread of life, and more, the wine of life also, to many. In him the father and the mother thus showed themselves alike in the singular weight and balance of a life, measured in its dealings with his fellow-men, and, for a man of his high-strung temperament, kept him singularly free from mistakes and blunders, as well as in the soaring wings that lifted him up to the very gates of heaven in its impassioned ecstasy and eloquence, and carried all souls with him. That whole family of Greenhill, known as “the Holy Family,” had all the same touch of genius and grace. The sister whom he loved more than any other in the world, and who made the care of her brother and his manse her chiefest joy, was finely kindred in womanly depth and subtlety of spirit; and now the only like-minded surviving sister of the dear old home, who watched and cheered him through the valley of death, has her solitude cheered by the love and gratitude of all who knew her tenderness to him who has gone, and far better, by that great Love that assures her daily, “Thy brother shall rise again.”

Then came Glasgow College. A dear friend of

his in far-off years, and to the end, Dr. Edmond of London, wrote me—"You send me heavy tidings; the genius lamp of the United Presbyterian denomination is quenched. Alas! my brother! But of course we sorrow not so—nay, we rejoice. Strange, but when I think of it, not strange, the first picture of our departed that came up to me when I read your message, was of two boys, William and George, in the Tyrones' Greek Class of Sandford, which I also, a raw country lad, had entered, who even then were shining as twin stars. I see them in the bench they occupied, their fresh scarlet college gowns covering their boyish forms." William rejoins George after nearly forty years. "Sweet and gentle George," Dr. Edmond adds, "beautiful and brilliant William, have now met again."

Under the shadow of the old St. Ninian's tower, whence they looked out in the hours of the battle of Bannockburn, a mile off, and heard its glorious tumult of patriotism, the most of the family lie sweetly, life's long Bannockburn over, and victory and liberty an inalienable possession through their Divine King. Last Thursday summer light streamed down and made bright and warm the home where he sleeps well with his kindred.

Then came the Theological Hall, also a session under Dr. Chalmers which left a mark on a spirit as finely tempered as Chalmers' own, but more kindred to the imagination of Edward Irving. To one preacher, Dr. Candlish, he always said he owed much for doctrinal power and oratorical urgency, though Candlish was even more unlike Robertson than Chalmers, but your minister was always a hospitable soul, full, as all such souls are, of a generous receptiveness,

and knowing, under all forms, men of his own power and passion. But all this led him up to the greatest influence of all—in Germany, under Tholuck and Neander. There, at least, his essential genius found its true kindred and home. For the Teutonic spirit, chiefly in its old mystics—as also in Luther, alike mystic in his passionate experience and evangelical in his Christian doctrine, and again in the deep learning and simple unconscious devoutness of Neander, and even more in the romantic lyrical movements of thought and feeling of Tholuck, so like his own—this German spirit breathed its crowning life into every member of his previous culture and made it in its atmosphere of redemption stand up and go forward an exceeding great army. Special inward tides and times of God's visitation we know not. Great in expression, he was greater in the possession and power of things he could not express. But these doubtless there were, and we can easily mark how the youthful enthusiasm became concentrated and consolidated and breathed out a fuller, nobler life. In these deserts—these lonely places of his soul, far more than in all colleges or even homes—the Spirit of God was with him till the time of his manifestation unto Israel.

The second and main part of his life, in Irvine and in his congregation, stretched during twenty-eight years, from 26th December, 1843, to the day that struck him down, never to be the same man again, in 1871. Removed into a siding from the busy overcrowding centres of toil and hurry, no place could have suited him better; and since David Dickson came here two hundred years earlier, curious to mark, from the same part of Stirlingshire, in this fine old centre

of Covenanting history and Ayrshire genius, another may be mentioned among those who have walked these Irvine streets—for Robert Burns, contrasted and yet alike, came here also in his 23d year and toiled among your grandfathers. Here, amidst its Sabbath-like stillness all the week, and its weekly Sabbath's spiritual rest and work in your homes and congregation, your minister worked, taught, and grew. Apart from his ministry, even John Galt did not mark more keenly your village humours; and James Montgomery left in childhood, leaving him to live out a poet-life among you; and had he possessed his purer, loftier piety, Robert Burns would have added the consecration to the poet's dream.

From this heart centre, as the years went on, our greater Scotch towns began to learn that a new vision and prophet had been sent to our land, a man with the learning of imagery in his love of Christ, and love of souls of the old Covenanter, Samuel Rutherford, with the trumpet imagery peals and magnificent pictures of Edward Irving, but without the narrowness which Rutherford got from his troubled times, and the errors that Irving fell into from his fevered brain—a man gathering all modern movements of intellect and imagination to adorn the everlasting truth and greatness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That long time of twenty-eight years, in the homely Cotton Row Church, and in this Trinity Church, springing out of his brain, and his own truest monument, he brightened. This old town and district lent the breath of genius and godliness, amongst its own streets, and lent a colouring to your golden sandy hillocks, to the serene gleam of the broadening Firth, and away up to the loftiest purple Arran peak.

I used to come here for many a year, and the ever genial affection, the easy abundant play of deepest thought in theology, philosophy, and above all, art, and in the glancing treatment of incident or expression, its sacred beginning and closing of morning and evening with prayers that bound and beautified the whole day, his visits to the poor and the sick, his smiling notice of every child, his shrewd talk with every man, his un-resting brain, his overflowing heart, these abide and shall abide till all years are done on earth, and shall pass and live where change cannot cloud or sever. And amidst all, there rose up before you a face, half of a poet and half orator, with the eternal brightness of that face of Shelley, with the resolute glow of thought of Chalmers. There were in it the dreamy heavy-laden eyes that looked betimes far withdrawn or flashed out in vivid gleam of acute observation or of loving regards. And over eyes rose and rounded the brow so ample, so sweet in its curve, so princely in its bearing, and beneath the lips that were the gates whence all the soul came out in measured cadence or sharp accent.

One can never forget his life in his study, where alone he filled his whole being with Divine truth and influence, where the pathos and joy, the inward cries and gladness, the fellowship with Christ, anointed him apart for his teaching and outpouring of soul in this place. For his teaching was in root intensely scriptural, evangelical, and spiritual. He loved sound words, and no one could better adorn Divine beauty; but the secret of his strength lay in his wrestling grip, in the upspringing blessing of dawn and splendour from the presence of God. Well conscious and heedful of all the changing influence of the times that gave new

shape and proportion and expression to Christian truth, he knew and loved best of all the eternal realities, the redeeming and regenerating influences that came into this world of sin and sorrow in Christ, at once the Lord of all creation as well as the greatness of all atonement and power. An abstract God of thought or of law, a rhetorical God of imagery and fancy, he could not live with nor live for, whether in himself or for others. So, heart to heart, beat answering to beat, he passed beyond the arctic region of an infinite law and power, and the splendours of an infinite beauty, to what could only be the home of his deepest needs, the heaven of his loftiest aspirations, to the infinite of love in the incarnate, crucified, and indwelling Christ. You know well how the cross and resurrection of Christ broke through upon this people; the glories of the Infinite Father, the comforts of the Holy Spirit, rose up before you in all his sermons, in which angel-like he bowed before God with veiled and silent face, and Baptist-like pointed and cried, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." And as he did so there rose up also the mist-hidden hungry wants of your hearts of sin and sorrow, coming up to meet the Divine revelation so noble and so needed. One of the great marvels of his teaching lay in this, that he made man feel the near warmth of the heart of Christ and long to come out of themselves and get within its glow and its light. Oh! it was a ministry having all the three dimensions of a Divine and human depth, and breadth, and height, and to these is surely pledged the fourth, that of everlasting length.

But as his life rung out its richest and most trium-

phant music, there came in, startling and sudden, the deep muffled notes of the muffled drum. An unexpected arrow of disease struck the soaring wing, and for many a day it was broke, and could not indeed bear again with so strong and prolonged a stroke. To him also came in God's ways of dealing with him what the prison was to Paul and a Patmos to John, and, shall we add, the cross to the Master. I need not tell you that sad story. Enough—pain nearly ended in death—long hanging over the edge of Eternity—separation from the regular work, and that in a moment when life's harvest was thickest and busiest—the silencing of that soul-like voice—the foreign retreat—the sadness of distance from old friends and faces—then the growing respite, but only for rare utterances in the old measure—why go over this pathetic story?—till at length last Sabbath he entered into Heaven's own rest, and his tongue is again loosed, and he shall no longer say, "I am sick!"

But kind things never failed him. Love of them who loved him in the days of high sunshine, made known in many a way, or word, and rare and munificent gifts, that filled his earthly cares, and, above all, the love of the Master, who continued with him in all his temptations, and so enriched him by His Divine manifestations that, though in a new position, he used to say he never felt happier, and so could well afford to glory in God in the furnace, and to show to all how he walked there in patience and possession of his soul with Jesus Christ.

Yet this, too, was in the hands of Him who leads the blessed by a way they know not, and does all these things to us and does not forsake us. This was but

the preparation, not amidst the splendour of young hope and the unbounded elasticity of manly strength for his life work in Irvine. It was the preparation, let us believe—aye, we know it—in this sombre and often secluded school of weariness and disappointment, for a work more blessed than even the dear old Irvine work—a work which after service led to suffering, but now to a service better far, and rising only to larger strength and joy.

Meanwhile, during fifteen years, what work he was permitted to do in public had on it a baptism of Divine freshness and power. And he himself lost no mood of cheerfulness, and lived with a richer range of chastened pathos and settled peace. The midnight brought down to him, on his pillow of hard trial, light from stars of promise and voices of Divine comfort he had never seen or heard before in his glowing meridian; and so that life, great in its strength, was made greater in its weakness, and all felt that in the Christian life, as in that of Christ, Calvary, Gethsemane, Bethany with its grave, sway men's souls from a purer height and in nobler depths than Cana with its wine of human joy, or Tabor with its Divinest transfiguration, or even the ascension with its opening Heaven. But now the beginning, the middle, the close of this poem of God. His Divine work has rounded itself into the perfect whole, and we feel that what we call his death is only his life starting from a higher point and more on its unending growth. "The rest," writes a dear friend, "has come now, and the weary suffering is over." He passed away quietly and very gradually just before the afternoon bells began to ring. The suffering look has worn off and the beauty of the

features has come out with the placid repose the tired frame now enjoys.

His intercourse with his sister during these weary weeks, by night and day, has been of the most tender and spiritual as well as natural character. . . . All his higher finer aspirations have, as his sister remarked, been showing themselves during this time more than ever." He said to another, "I am peaceful and joyful. I am all unworthy in myself, but have the worthiness of the Lord." To his dear friend, Mr. Taylor, he said, "I have had a great deal of pain, but I have good prospects before me. I am perfectly resigned either way." A day or two before the end he asked to be read to him the walk of Elijah and Elisha down to the river Jordan, and the sundering of the two by the chariot and horses of fire, one to the prophet's reward, and the other to the prophet's work. It was difficult for his sister to read it. We look up to-day to the heavens where he has gone, and as we look up we cry, "The chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof."

Your head is now taken from you. Half of the hearts of many has gone with him, but the track of the fire-course still fills the sky of memory. It was the same fire that was first kindled far back in the old home facing the Ochil Hills, and is now perfect in the everlasting home where he stands high in bliss among the hills of God. The fire that kindled the boy's heart glowed far and wide in the man's work, a fire that rose above all earthly brightness, and burned high amidst all earthly sorrow, touched by a new life into a song of unbroken thanksgiving, a service of perfection in the new home and church above. We stand, and

the feeling thrills us as it did Bunyan when he joined the pilgrims passing through the gates of the New Jerusalem and saw no man behind, saying, "I have seen; I wished myself among them."

Meanwhile, let us, Elisha-like, take up the descending mantle and wrap it about us, and seek what he prayed for as a double portion of his spirit. Let his dear young colleague and successor, in whom his heart rejoiced, and through whom you feel God has given you another to richly feed and guide you in the Lord, let him take fresh courage, and it shall be said of him, day by day, as it was said of Elisha, "There is the man of God who goes by us continually." And let us in our various lot and life walk the more hopefully now that the Holy God who never failed him will never fail us. For it is not genius, nor eloquence, nor admonition, nor fame, nor even deepest human love, that are God's best gifts. These are the hearts that love Christ because of His great love to them. The likeness to Christ the joy of His work. These are immortal, these share in the everlasting greatness of Christ Himself, these endure with Him who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Nations, homes, and congregations pass away, but redeemed souls abide; and may we abide with them.

#### DR. ROBERTSON AS A PREACHER.

We know no other preacher exactly, or indeed at all, like Dr. Robertson. He is so individual as to be almost alone of his kind—and his kind it would be hard to define. It would contain in it, as in a subtle

and rare mixture, most fervent evangelical doctrine, put in closest relation to the human soul, and with full insight into modern thought; and also a strange, wizard-like dwelling among the ultimate truths of the spiritual world, with a magical affluence of words, alike picture and music. There is in him the perfervid genius of the Scot—the old Scot who was also a bard; while his clear intuitions of both worlds—those of soul and of sense—are those of the Teutonic Minnesinger, who was also the singer of Divine love. Besides, there is the thinker, whose thoughts come before us under the handling of the artist, the artist in the high sense of the man in whom the creative act is repeated by which the symbol and the substance become one. There are other relations in which Dr. Robertson stands to those who know and love him well. On the true and tender friend, the wit without satire, the humorist without vulgarity, the many-glancing genius full of ready memories and rich suggestions, we do not here linger. We wish to get as near as we can to the open secret of the poet-preacher.

One thing that strikes us only in our last analysis is, that all the pictures, full of change and vividness, of his imagination and emotion are encased and dominated by a firmly set framework of order and plan. The unexpectedness—the *abandon*—the abundance—so seemingly boundless, so charmingly startling, are governed by a severe inner order and balance. The mightiest musician, in his most unlimited soarings or unexpected subtleties, must, though he may not be conscious of it, be obedient to severest mathematical laws of tone and time.

It may be a surprise to some to learn that Dr.

Robertson's original bent was towards mathematics. We have the same fact in the mental history of Edward Irving, Thomas Chalmers, and Thomas Carlyle. Before they had broken out in their individual genius they had struggled with the exactest physical laws of the universe. And we need not wonder at this. Genius is not disorder—genius is the highest order.

The world was only truly created when its huge chaotic masses were drilled by the music of law and spirit into their armies—their hosts in heaven and earth. We are God's poem, as Paul says; and in other measure, but as real manner, is the work of a poet-preacher worthy of the same name. What is a saint, but the man with the inner life set to the music of highest deeds! What is a poet-preacher, but the prophet of spiritual things, mating these to the music of noblest words! It is, as at the beginning, the breathing into the dust of the earth the breath of life; and so man, God's poem, is made. It is this principle that accounts for the fact that the discourses of Dr. Robertson, so full of tone and colour and movement that the simplest see, and by their seeing pass into, a new world, are to them, as also to the most refined and profound, full of the best evidence of divine realities, because these walk through his sentences clothed so as to be seen, and speaking so as to be believed. In Aaron's rod, the blossoms were as divine as the rod itself; indeed the blossoms best proved that it was the rod of God. The harsh sounds of earth, modulated and harmonised, become sweet airs that evidence the world of peace and perfection whence they come. This effectually saves Dr. Robertson's

flowing eloquence from passing the line into tinselled rhetoric; while his plainest propositions have a colour on their cheeks and a light in their eye that prelude the coming idealism and poetry. The beauty of his sermon is, as a French writer calls all beauty, "the splendour of the true." The statue is not less but more solid because, like Memnon's statue, the light rings out from it in sister music. What, then, is named imagination is, in Dr. Robertson, the predominating power—and it is the power that makes you see in clear form and modulation the inner reality and harmony of the truth; and he being "native and endued to this element," it is curious to note how he glides and carries you with him ere you are aware across the threshold of what is around and within, far upward into spiritual visions. Doors in heaven open upon you as you are lifted up from the dingiest Patmos of your pew, and pass in among the living creatures, the soaring hallelujahs, till you stand entranced for a season too brief, but never forgotten, before the beatific vision—the sight that makes all things new. It is the fairy tale true in the highest experience. The child wanders a step or two into the forest, and all transforming influences come upon him, and upon all the marvellous region. The young man opens his eyes, in obedience to the prophet, and sees the divine armies and victories near him and in him; while around him are still the hard hostilities of his troubled fight. All thus becomes concrete—nothing is abstract, in Dr. Robertson's sermons. He is dramatic when life passes before him as a tragedy of weakness, of sorrow, of sin, where the soul, with its many passions, is placed alongside of the Saviour with His infinite mercies, and at last

ends in some saddest *miserere* of defeat or upspringing song of redemption. He is lyrical when he tells out what he himself sees and sings, and so most persuasively teaches. Sometimes it is the lyric of a little child, with its broken, groping cry; sometimes the lyric clothes itself with the shining robes of imagery, and the uplifted trumpet-tones as of an angel.

This leads us to the thought that Dr. Robertson is not so much oratorical as oratorial. As he speaks, the preacher finds his moulds of expression in the subtlest and most soul-like of all the fine arts—music. But we hardly dwell even for a little upon this analogy of music, with its inner measure and balance, its following out, through all variations, the unity of the originating keynote—as a many branched and leaved tree is but the expansion of the strict skeleton of its ground-plan—till we turn, as to a fitter and fuller analogy, to that art in which all arts meet and find a home—architecture. His sermons are Cathedrals, with their carefully laid basis of Christian doctrine and fact determining the inner structure of the building; the west door leading in from the world, up through the three-fold nave and aisles as of the one Trinity to the altar of sacrifice and the Real Presence; and ending in the great east window as it lets in the flood of heaven's light, while all around, beneath and above, are the far recesses, dim crypts, and soaring arches. Then comes sculpture, and places on each niche, or solitary eminence, its saint, hero, prophet, adoring or abased; and in by many windows comes painting, and gives to the common light of day forms and histories and types of the Christian life in celestial hues, rich in dark shade or transfiguring brightness. Then a holy fragrance seems

to dwell in the air; and, last of all, to fill, interpret, and lift all into a divine significance, comes music, with its piercing cries of penitence—its calm melody of faith—its marching song of the campaign—its triumphant acclaims of the victory.

It is some such effect which several of his sermons have so often produced. Take his unforgotten sermon on “They saw God, and did eat and drink;” or his sermon on another keynote, “Unto whom can we go but unto Thee? Thou hast the words of eternal life;” or that stirring description of Christian communion, “Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another,” &c.; or his searching into the human conscience, going in by its noblest doors, “He did not commit Himself unto man, for He knew what was in man.” Dr. Robertson never acts as a spy, satirist-like, upon the frail or foul hearts of his brothers and sisters. He walks in prophet-like, full of insight, and says, “What, alas! do I see here?” There are, we know, other discourses which are even more noted than those; but these, to our great loss, we have not heard—that on “John the Baptist in Prison,” and the “Rainbow round the Throne,” and the “Silence in Heaven for Half-an-hour,” and the “Shining of Moses’ Face.” But though some are more deeply and loftily built than others, yet the plastic hand is seen in all, and the touch of the chisel proceeds from the cunning spirit, that God has inspired with the wisdom of a Bezaleel. To have heard such sermons is a joy for ever, a cup of wine that gives a lasting gladness and a foretaste of an everlasting Eshcol.

But to hear the preacher, and to see him as he preaches, cannot be perpetuated. With the look of a

poet—as also of an orator—in mould of brow, suggesting Shelley ; in dimness of drooping eye, reminding of Chalmers ; when he speaks 'tis “even as if an angel sang, and as listening to the young-eyed cherubim.” As long as he moves on his hearers follow ; or if they weary, it is because the pace is too swift, and the scenes by their very splendour wear out the edge of the keenest attention. Thus Dr. Robertson stood many a year in Irvine, and now and again in other places. It is a loss to very many that the lute-like, organ-like music so well remembered can now be so rarely heard, is now for the most part silent. Still, it is better to remember such a voice than to hear others, and the music abides though the musician is mute. But I must stop, though the half has been left untold. I thank, and I am sure many do, Mr. Guthrie for gathering some of the fragments that fed so many hundreds in the wilderness of their mind, heart, and life.

As long as the pulpit has such preachers, and Christianity such expounders, the world will stop to listen, and be drawn by a higher than an Orpheus-like music. The grand, blessed peace with which Christ soothes, lifts up, and saves men will come through it still to multitudes of the sick, the sad, the sinful ; and men will cry out, “How beautiful are the feet upon the mountains of him that bringeth good tidings !” So our noble friend and preacher came to many, and made them glad. Now he is withdrawn for a little, we wish him all the gladness of him who sits in silence at the feet of the Preacher of preachers, the Comforter of souls ; and we know that at this hour many are still led by the undying memory of his magical words, and

are taking up his old loved work of leading others to Christ, helped by the inspiration of his example, and above all by that help of Christ that is needed by the greatest, and never denied to the least of His servants.\*

\* Printed during Dr. Robertson's lifetime.

## XII.

*THE REV. PRINCIPAL CAIRNS, D.D.,  
EDINBURGH.*

It was said of Dr. Cairns in the United Presbyterian Synod, when elected to be the Principal of its Theological Hall, that while he knew much that others did not know, there was one thing he did not know, which the humblest man in his own church and far beyond it knew well, his own noble character. Esteemed greatly from the very first, a growing reverence is gathering round his name every year, and wherever he stands up in any assembly or pulpit of the land. We shrink, in his own spirit, from any detailed reference to him ; but praising such a rare man is an act of gratitude to God and of encouragement to many.

John Cairns was born sixty-six years ago, near Cockburnspath, in Berwickshire. His father and mother were of the highest order of their nation—hard-working, “grave livers,” and as Wordsworth singled out as the parents of the hero of his “Excursion,” with their “plain living and high thinking,” full of earnest love, and, best of all, lifted up by the old Secession doctrine and piety into a divine atmosphere.

Such parents stamped their own image of native

force of body and mind, as well as of Christian elevation and fervour, upon their children. The appearance of the self-denying, devout home within, combined with that of the German Ocean and the Lammermoor Hills outside, meeting his youthful eye every hour, has left indelible traces on Dr. Cairns' strong nature to this day.

Another eminent Scotchman, totally different in temperament and genius and life, had much the same parentage and upbringing. Thomas Carlyle bore the deep imprint of his father and mother, and their grand unworldly Secession teaching and practice, to the last, as well as the freshness of the Annandale streams and moors, and the stretches of the Solway, and the heights of Skiddaw. But here the likeness ends. Much of the feverish passion and doubt of Carlyle came from his loosened hold of the original tendency. In Dr. Cairns the old teaching, enriched by learning and harmonised by thought, has imparted certainty and calmness to his life. Carlyle, however, never ceased to love and respect his old minister, Mr. Johnstone of Ecclefechan, whom he considered to be the noblest priest of God he ever knew; and in the same manner and measure does Dr. Cairns cherish the memory of his old minister and friend, the Rev. Wm. Inglis of Stockbridge, whose sacred and sagacious character lies deep in the old district to this hour. We have known, moreover, a man of great mature faith who has risen to wealth, and, better far, has grown in princely beneficence, who never refers to the name of this his old minister, who first touched his soul and admitted him to the Church, without a glow of gratitude on his cheek and a tear of reverence at his eye.

What determined the lad Cairns to turn from some rural occupation we cannot say. But it is easy to see how, with such a quick, large brain, and such spiritual impressions derived from his home and congregation, he went straight, as so many Scottish lads have done, to study for the ministry. And, like those others, he had to teach in village and town schools that he might obtain the teaching of the College professors. Nothing has more marked all his life than the inborn, unworn courage, the silent unboasting independence, that has raised him above all temptations of gain as well as of earthly pleasure and ambition. If utter unconsciousness, and want of reference to what he is and has done, is a note of truest nobility of character, alike human and Christian, we know of no man higher than himself. We know that this quality equally shone out before others in his two predecessors in the Theological Hall, John Brown of Haddington, and George Lawson of Selkirk; and yet in Dr. Cairns, as in them, it only concealed—if, indeed, it did not intensify—a rock-like firmness and enduringness of a character that knew well what it had chosen for life, and that it had chosen it because it was best and could last.

His University career in Edinburgh was one of untiring industry: an industry that possesses him still. A constitution of iron—of almost ascetic habit of living—has indeed been once and again jeopardised, and nearly succumbed to the too long and unmitigated strain. But this industry working upon a mind of great powers raised him in the estimation of all to the rank of the first student of his time in the University. Unable to be superficial in anything—eminent in Classical and also in English literature—the main

thought and bent of his powers went spontaneously into Metaphysics and Moral Philosophy. None of his teachers have left such clear and enduring marks on his whole structure of mind and thought as Sir William Hamilton. Modest under every influence, and yet independent of all, the great Professor of Logic, moving in the line of his student's native tendencies, turned them into known channels. Hence we trace, if also to his own intellectual mould, yet deepening and widening it, his quiet unfailing avoidance—not dislike or disdain (for all Dr. Cairns' passions are intellectual passions)—of mere rhetoric as well as of a quasi-omniscient speculation. A severity of taste, a soundness of intellect, makes all his imagery noble in its simplicity, and all his reasoning strong through its moderation. To Wordsworth among poets, and Butler among thinkers, he was early attracted through his belonging to the same lineage of mind. It is not wonderful, therefore, that Sir William Hamilton gave his young student a great respect, and even affection; and few things in the life of his favourite pupil is better worth remembering than the manner of his responding to, and returning it, in a letter published by Professor Veitch, in which he pressed on Sir William the claims of personal Christianity. We must add, however, that Sir William's reply was equally worthy of his modest and truly noble character.

But we linger too long in this enchanted ground of early hopes and studies. Dr. Cairns passed in usual course to the Theological Hall, and crowned his student career by a session at the University of Berlin. We only mention, with regard to these closing preparations, that he gained most from his reverend professor and

predecessor in the ministry, Dr. Balmer; from his noble father and friend, Dr. Brown; and in another field, and with fresh impulse proceeding from the new surroundings, from that last of Church fathers, that greatest Church historian, August Meander.

We well remember, at the distance of more than forty years, our first sight of John Cairns, as we met at the beginning of our first theological session. We can see him looking in at the crypts of Wellington Street Secession Church. His fame had preceded him; but this was our first curiously eager look at him. Much taller than most, as grave-looking as any, with jet black hair, with mildly but keenly shrewd eyes under a cliff-like brow, strikingly resembling, as was thought in those years, the portrait of a man he otherwise resembled in much—Andrew Fuller. He had even then the tight grasp of the hand that has shaken indeed many since, and the sudden explosive laugh shining out, shall we say, amidst the expanse of his gravity. Many a talk afterwards we had with him on Isaac Taylor, and John Foster, and Thomas Chalmers; but then, and even yet, next to Sir William Hamilton, and higher because in a higher department, was the charm and conquest over him of that most enduring and passionate of all great religious thinkers—Pascal.

All this was in the year 1840. Many things have happened since then; but now, in 1884, looking back, what a nobly-unbroken, ever-ascending career God has given him to lead! And looking at him, while much changed in colour of cheek and hair, the nobler elements of an everlasting youth remain, and remain as a fuller and sweeter attractiveness, the simplicity, the kindness, the earnestness, the devoutness of the man.

Dr. Cairns passed on at once into his thirty-one years' ministry in Berwick—truly a model ministry, alike towards God and man, with its lovely, lofty thoughts of divine things in his study; with its loving, solicitous thoughts for his people, however far off, in their sickness and sorrow, in their declension or their victories; in its massive, fervent instructions in the pulpit; in its thorough consecration of bodily and spiritual strength to Christ and to souls. In Berwick streets, in Berwickshire and Northumberland highways, and from lanes, men eyed him and felt towards him as of old they did towards Elisha as “the man of God who continually passed by.”

Amidst all he never lost the severe continuity of study. No man stood so high among thinkers in all Scotland as John Cairns. Men in all Churches knew he had most modestly but signally risen above them at College; and when the Chair of Moral Philosophy and of Logic in Edinburgh fell vacant, he might have filled either with the unanimity and enthusiasm of all. But he esteemed the Christian pulpit and the care of souls—the meanest and most ignorant—a greater work and honour than any other place of greater dignity and influence.

Only one thing could part him from the ministry of his congregation—that was, his appointment first in 1868 to the other ministry, that of the training of the future ministers of his own Church, then in 1876 as Principal. Not that he limited himself during these thirty-one years by thoughts and toils to his own congregation. He has been from the beginning what Burke called his son, “a public creature.” He has preached in almost every part of Scotland, where his

presence and word were welcomed as a blessing from on high; and in every effort for God and man, in company, in Union negotiations, in the Pan-Presbyterian Council, in revivals on the one hand and Good Templarism on the other, his labours have been abundant. His intellect could grasp the principle of any theme, and his temper could remain unruffled amidst every irritating detail. Never self-seeking, nor aiming at some party advantage, all on every side felt the law of kindness was on his lips, and that they could safely trust in him. The influence of many years has grown to such a weight, and is felt to be so deserved and unsought, that we know not another man in Scotland who at this moment fills so large a space in the reverence and trust of all religious men.

All this is the result of the many elements which have created and sustained in its oneness and power such an influence. Even the farthest off outsider feels his influence as a man and a Christian—so transparent, so gentle, so intelligent, and elevated is he.

Those nearer to him, and having a more learned eye, mark the genuineness and power he has as scholar and thinker. As a scholar, some may easily surpass him in miscellaneous reading of books; but Dr. Cairns knows the best of books on the best subjects, and in every language. Homer was his recreation after writing the biography of Dr. Brown. Tertullian or St. Augustine go into his carpet-bag, and are his fellow-travellers when he goes out for a month. To write an Encyclopædia article on Knox, he gave nearly half a year to the reading and annotation of his greater writings. To write a lecture on Voltaire, he read volume after volume of his sixty. If he produced a

review of Schleiermacher, or Rouse, or Strauss, it was based on laborious, irksome reading thousands of pages. We could instance much more of this sort that may well rebuke and encourage other students. As a thinker he is greater than as a scholar, for he has no learning that he has not made his own by independent thinking. Hence the measure, the moderation, as well as strength and clearness of his reasoning—knowing well Hegel and Schelling, as also Mill and Comte. On both sides of the philosophical field his keen, often-tested sense of the limits of human thought, beyond which all is uncertain, as well as of its range, within which all is certain, has placed him on sure ground between the mystery of the known Infinite and the clearness of the known Finite. Few men of his time, knowing so well the materialistic and idealistic schools of thought, have been so little moved by either. He has only gained from either its special value, the keenness of observation of facts of the one, the reverence of mysteries, equally facts, of the other.

But his philosophical thought has always been allied to his Christian thought. The true unity that underlies all thought—the divine harmony of reason and revelation, is the keynote of his thinking and the goal of his desires. Dr. Cairns might have possessed all these qualities and not have been the great preacher that men have so often felt him to be. His gifts of learning might have enlightened, and his power of thought might have conformed, but one thing is needful to make a great Christian orator, and this, too, Dr. Cairns had; and it has given a tenfold value, indeed a totally new value, to all else he had. That mildest of men, as he moves on in quickening and long-

resounding march, kindles, like the cloud in Ezekiel's vision, at last into a flame that explodes in vehement passion of appeal or ecstasy, and then by accent, loud and strong in its surge and wail, catches the old unconsciously learned, but never-forgotten, rush and sweep of the German Ocean of his early days; you feel as if, kindred in simplicity and power, some angry wind were sweeping into your hearing and heart from the old Lammermoor Hills. On such occasions the whole man reveals himself. Thus we see what deep foundations, what burning fires, lie beneath, and are ready to break out from that subdued, watchful, childlike exterior. There is the Rev. Dr. Cairns confessing the deepest struggle and violence, the most pathetic cry, the most high ecstasy of the human heart before thousands. The man is transfigured into the orator who shatters and melts other men; but the orator is still the man, simple and unconscious in the hour of consternation as in that of friendship. When we are at this point, we are sorely tempted to compare and contrast the three greatest preachers of late years in the United Presbyterian Church—John Cairns, John Ker, and William Robertson. To do so thoroughly and vividly would be a great lesson in sacred eloquence. But though we have left much untold, we must, however abruptly, close with the earnest desire, that all will unite in praying that a power of so great and growing a Christian blessing may long be preserved to this Church by Him who has so long given and ordained it.

## XIII.

*REV. HUGH CRICHTON, D.D.\**

I HAVE lingered before giving a sketch of Dr. Crichton ; and, though I shrink from it, let me take with you one steady look at the good man, ere we pass away to ordinary duty.

Dr. Hugh Crichton was born in Old Cumnock, Ayrshire, on the 2d December 1797. His father and mother belonged to, perhaps, the best of all classes, that of daily honourable work, the protector and trainer of character in shrewd sagacity and self-respecting independence. In his early home there were also the affections of brothers and sisters, which came out in mutual help in after years, and the advantages of a godly upbringing. Ayrshire, moreover, still retained men and women who had seen those who had conversed with the old martyrs of the covenant. The most prophet-like and memorable of their preachers, Alexander Peden, lay in the old churchyard on the slope above the down. Airsmoss, where Cameron fell, was a few miles off, and traditions of that heroic Christian time quickened the spiritual atmosphere of the country-side. Dr. Crichton's father carried out the spiritual struggle of these men, and became a Seceder, and, as such, took an active part in the origination of

\* Dr. Graham was for some years colleague and successor to Dr. Crichton.

a Burgher Church in Cumnock. There was in his youth a remarkably eloquent and fervid minister, Mr. Wilson, who encouraged the lad. Such were the religious influences that surrounded his boyhood and rising youth; and I have often felt, in conversation with him, that these were the unconscious creation-days of the earnest Christian and warm-hearted pastor he became.

Besides these deepest home and church influences, there was, all over that district, a wide intellectual movement, full of genial qualities of all kinds. There was a feeling produced by that scenery, exquisitely varied in rural beauty and picturesqueness, yet bordering on wild moor and mountain; and also the keen Scottish study of character, not only in its nobler but in its quainter aspects; and these two elements became audible in a dialect than which none is more graphic and idiomatic in all Scotland. Nothing can illustrate this point better than the poems of Robert Burns, most of which were written a few miles from the place, and a few years from the time, of which we now speak. I mention this the more, because, in addition to his deep piety, that breathed of old settled influences and traditions, a most vivid feature in him was a humour, and a vocabulary to express it, that occasionally in his freer moods amounted to something like genius. This humour was, as usual, a child of his loving and keen-eyed nature, as was also its twin sister, sympathy; and unless when he was morally indignant, his utter scorn of meanness and conceit was more or less mitigated by this less severe quality. It was, therefore, with Dr. Crichton, as with most others, and especially such as owe their future direction and power to personal qualities more

than to acquired learning and skill, that the first and deepest soil of youth and home gives flavour and colour to the latest and ripest fruit.

It is a fine ambition in Scotland—at least it was so in those days—that some one of the family should be the scholar, and, better still, the minister. And out of the quick masses of religion and thought in every village it was almost certain that some piece would develop into this highest form of life. The lot here fell on the younger brother, as it so often does; but, as is so often also the case, as many can testify, the elder brother works at home, to supply the needs of the younger, who, in some Glasgow or Edinburgh garret or parlour, is toiling his way through various learning. Of no one have I heard Dr. Crichton speak so affectionately as of his brother Adam, who helped to hold the ropes when he went down into the mine of knowledge; and he did not fail to repay the kindness many years afterwards. I have no doubt that Dr. Crichton's College years were full of genuine work and true acquirement; though then, I suppose, as ever after, he had no love of working hard for the outward distinctions of learning, nor, in fact, did he ever devote himself to learning for its own sake. But his future literary work showed that, when he liked, he could exert a mind that had absorbed much of what was elevated and just in thought, and that could employ a style chastened and vigorous in expressing it.

From the College, the next step for those in our Church who have given themselves to the ministry is to the Theological Hall. In taking such a step, a question far more important than that of literary and philosophical acquirements is that of personal religion.

I never heard Dr. Crichton himself speak highly of his state and character, in relation to the holy and loving God and Saviour. I have often heard him speak most affectingly on this point with despondency and in sadness. This humility and self-abasement lay a great shaded depth, under the joy of his social movements and the sweetness of his daily spiritual walk and work. I believe it was this feature of his character that would explain many of his irresolutions, but it also gave a pure and touching charm of dignity and tenderness to his whole life. After all, such a profound and wide basis of humility before God is the strength of all high and sweet character. It strikes the roots of the soul far down into the perfections of God, the atonement of Christ, and the helps of the Holy Spirit; and it can produce none other than fruit like unto such grand and inexhaustible realities. So I have no doubt that the heart of the young man went to the Hall touched by the Lord.

Selkirk, with Dr. Lawson as Professor, was the first school of the Prophets he attended; but Dr. Lawson, that Samuel-like sage, scholar, and saint, died after his first year, and he went to study under Dr. Dick. I do not think he owed much to Dr. Lawson. There was no time sufficient for that unconsciously impressive man, so like Neander of Berlin in depth of learning and piety, as well as quaintness of manner, to leave the mark on Dr. Crichton he invariably left on those who had been longer with him. But to Dr. Dick, under whom he studied four years, at the time of life when the mind is building up its house of thought and principle in which to settle and work for life, he owed in this respect, as has always seemed to me, more

than to any other man. In this result much was due to the time, the teacher, and the scholar. The period of Dr. Dick's professorship lay between an old passing era and one slowly coming into being and power. The Puritan, Marrowmen, Boston and Erskine setting of Scriptural truth, both in system and in style, had gradually passed up through John Brown of Haddington, and found its last genuine, though in many points independent, representative in Dr. Lawson. Dr. Dick, while embodying all the things most surely believed among us, and these down to their details, put them into a more compact form and in a more modern garb. He adjusted their make and manner to the new habits of thought and style. He himself was naturally a man of clear, comprehensive, uncoloured style of mind, severely and coldly classical, yet with occasional fervours when he gave his spirit play, and always with genuine manliness of thought and purity reaching to elevation of taste. To a young mind with the tendencies of Dr. Crichton such a man had a singular attraction. He commanded respect, satisfied taste, and had that similarity of powers, combined with the superiority of a strong nature and cultured seniority, which alike attract and mould others. This influence of Dr. Dick was one very extensively exerted, and did much to shape the thought and style of many refined and devoted ministers who are rapidly passing away. It remained with Dr. Crichton all through his ministry, and with other causes made him either intellectually or spiritually insensitive to, and uncognisant of, the new shapes of thought and expression that are now, in right and wrong ways, doing their work. To take two extreme instances, on opposite sides: he was

utterly foreign to modes of thought represented by Thomas Carlyle on the one hand, or John Henry Newman on the other.

There was another school, though not called such, though really so, in which Dr. Crichton was learning his final lessons. The majority of our Divinity students have to earn in leisure months the means of education. This threw him into a family in East Lothian, where he lived as tutor for years. It was a family high in all generous and polished ways. The gentleman that was always in him was there developed, and what that meant in relation to him your memory can supply as my words cannot. We have lost the original, and no portrait, drawn however skilfully and lovingly, will ever represent it. Some men are gentlemen in feeling, and others in manner, and some are a little of both; but Dr. Crichton was so thoroughly both that he gave us a new idea and a higher illustration of what that grand old name means. I have often tried to analyse it, but have always given it up, for it was a charm compounded of many simples; and after I had carefully separated the elements, still the total living effect was left unaccounted for. Whatever else he was—devout, scholarly, even humorous—he was always, within and without, the gentleman. He never lost that fine essential quality, in his most joyful moods of health, nor in his most vacant stammering moods of disease. To rise so high in such an excellence that one, on comparing him with many others, feels he was not a whit behind any, and far beyond nearly all, is a rare attainment and a most subtle power. It was felt in his bearing in the pulpit, in his walk along the street, in his most earnest tones at

a deathbed, in his most casual greeting in ordinary life; it charmed the old and the young, the rich and the poor; it made men of the world feel drawn to the deeper and better things of his Christian piety; it made the good love the doctrine of God their Saviour all the more because it was so adorned; it made his people proud of him, and his presence a joy and sweetness to all. That highest of all fine arts can never be lost to the world as long as our memories and hearts preserve such a finished specimen as we had among us, lending its grace to the greatest truths of the Gospel as well as to the smallest intercourse of life.

Whether the fascination of such associations was the prevailing influence or not I can hardly say; but he paused two years before going on to the work of the ministry. I believe it did not increase his anxiety in this matter; but at last the deep religious element asserted its power, and he moved on to a work which was to be henceforth the burden and the blessing of his life. I believe the pause in the stream only gathered up its waters to flow forward more powerfully in after work.

He was ordained over his first charge on the 17th of January 1826, so that on the day of his death he had all but completed forty-five years of his ministry. Duntocher is a little village dependent on several large mills, and situated on the banks of the Clyde, where it has still the beauty of a river, without the grandeur of the noble Frith it afterwards becomes. It was exactly the place to satisfy his love of Christian work, his taste for exquisite scenery, and his desire for progress in thought and character. The twelve years he spent there were perhaps the sunniest in his whole life. In spite of

much broken health and its nervous depressions, he had a still untouched fund of splendid vivacity and spirits, and large spaces clear for study, work, and enjoyment. Living in his manse, without wife or children, all these years, and in the comparative retirement of the village, he had time and strength for thoughts that do not come to one in the work and distractions of a large town, because they are driven away by alien intrusions, or never take root in a soil otherwise drained of its strength. When he was tired of his studies, he could go forth, make the whole congregation his family, and pour out his warm heart in home after home; or he would fill his manse with troops of friends, who came to soothe his depressions as an invalid, or to share hospitalities, which he dispensed with the graciousness of a lord. And the man was shown in his choice of friends. Alas! they are most of them, and long ago, dead; but men of mark they were in their day and place. They were men like Mr. Smart of Paisley, perhaps the most majestic figure I ever saw ascend a pulpit stair; Dr. Baird, a man of wide knowledge, chivalrous spirit, and inborn generosity; Dr. Beattie, with his rough and shaggy sagacities; Dr. Johnston of Limekilns, his oldest and dearest friend, a man of most judicial temper of mind; Dr. Marshall of Kirkintilloch, the initiator of the Voluntary Church controversy, whose public controversial gifts and private pacific character alike distinguished his course and shaded its close; Dr. Somerville, the neighbour to Dr. Crichton in Dumbarton, a man to whose industry, zeal, and wisdom our Foreign Mission owes an immense debt; Dr. Macfarlane, now in London, growing in power and useful-

ness with every year of his life. I could mention others, but the kind of men he naturally gathered around him was both an index of what he was, and an increase of it in that surest and most stimulating way of living impulse and suggestion.

But his great work was his work in the congregation. To feed it with food convenient and with the finest of the wheat was the work of his quiet readings and reflections. Then, week by week, he produced those carefully composed sermons which still remain buried in his beautiful neat shorthand, but which, Sabbath after Sabbath, were translated out of it into fervid affections, and live in the souls of many gone to glory, and many still on earth. I believe the Duntocher period was, as was natural, that of his most resolute and rewarding study. Not a man naturally fond of sentence-making, he must often have fought bravely against his dislike. But he did fight and overcome. There he became the preacher he was ever afterwards. He had a firm, correct, spacious view of the great truths of the Gospel, dealing neither in speculation nor rhetoric, basing his teaching on God's Word, building it up in orderly succession of doctrine, experience, and practice, adorning it with a sparing use of chastened, and sometimes lofty, illustration, but, above all, breathing through it, in soul, voice, and eye, most fervent and winning affection. Sometimes, through weakness of body and treachery of memory, the wheels of the chariot moved slowly; but there were times when few men could excel him in Scriptural authority and unction, in solid sculptured pieces of thought, in earnestness, now solemn, now gentle, and always sincere. Then, as ever, the home-truth from which

he started, and to which he returned, was Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. The doctrinal centrality and pre-eminence, the emotional overwhelmingness, for conviction, comfort, and growth, the practical supremacy of the Gospel of the Incarnate Redeeming Saviour, were surely believed, deeply felt, and always preached by him. He spake because he believed; and through the Spirit using such speech of His servant, many believed and were built up in their most holy faith.

The first time I ever saw and heard Dr. Crichton was when I was a boy of ten years of age, in the neighbouring town of Paisley. I have notes of the services, given as a school exercise; and looking at them after the interval of nearly forty years, I can see how thoroughly he was moulded in sentiment and style at that time. I remember also the peculiar charm, made up of kindness and devoutness, which he exerted over all, even the young, then as ever. In Duntocher he was also great as a pastor. In that field his finest qualities came out unreservedly and effectively. Physical depression might sometimes mar the pulpit utterance and rob it of its power; but face to face, at the sick-bed and in the social circle, he was always himself. I have already indicated that specific gift God had given him, both by nature and grace. He was supreme in this, and never more so than when in Duntocher. There he used gleefully to say he was prophet, priest, and king. He loved and was loved, and these instruments of usefulness had scarcely any abatement.

So time wore away, and God was fitting him unconsciously, by experience, study, and work, for another and more trying and richer field. It was on the 17th

April 1838 that Dr. Crichton was inducted as colleague and successor to the venerable Dr. Stewart, the first minister of Mount Pleasant congregation. For nearly thirty long years Dr. Stewart had laboured in this congregation,—from the time it was in the Marble Rooms (now in the very heart of the town), in Gloucester Street, till the Ark of the Lord was placed in this stately church built for His worship. He was a man of most vigorous mind and kindling heart, and these brought to bear upon the great themes of the Gospel, and well seconded by a manly presence and resounding voice, stamped him a true orator by the double token of nature and grace. He stands out a great historical figure in our congregation. But now he was worn out; work of all sorts, schisms, old age, had exhausted him; and at last he sought for help. The old Elijah's mantle—for he had much of Elijah's bold and passionate bearing and speech—fell on one who was eminently an Elisha; one who loved to go in and out, not among solitary places, but among human hearts and homes. That Dr. Crichton came here was owing to the singular providence that he moderated most unexpectedly in his own call; and curious it is to notice, that perhaps the only thoroughly good result of the connection of this church with the Presbytery of Glasgow was, that but for it he would not, in all probability, have been our minister.

When he came he found Mount Pleasant then one of three Scotch Presbyterian congregations, the other two being Rodney Street and Oldham Street. He found it weakened by division and dispirited by disappointment. But he set himself to the work, and in a few years, by his character and gifts, he brought

back the remnants of an earlier separation to the old home, and gathered in fresh numbers. Mount Pleasant became the best congregation of the denomination in England; and though since that time many other churches have sprung up around her, and five directly from her; though population flows to the circumference, and she is now left in the centre; she has always maintained a most honourable position, and will maintain it, so long as God has work for her to do, and gives her grace to be willing to do it. In the midst of his successful work Dr. Crichton was married to one who made him a home indeed. Twelve years since, some of us went to lay her in the same grave where he now lies. Looking over the whole of their united life, no one who knew them both could fail to mark with what singular fitness she was made to be a help to him. She had all the qualities that he had least or almost nothing of—method, decision, management, a power to plan and to carry out a plan; and, above all, she devoted herself to him with a cheerful love and a self-surrendering devotion, that I shall not say is rare, but was most beautiful to behold. Of their two children, one of them is far off in China, and we all pray that his father's God may be with him when he hears of his sad bereavement. The other is with us; and she, with her husband, were blessings indeed to him. And the love his wife gave was returned by him; I have heard him in declining years mutter her name fondly in his dreams. All the more happy was this strengthening affection, seeing, in the midst of work, his occasional invalidism passed into one that became more or less chronic.

It was a considerable trial for Dr. Crichton, at his

comparatively early years, and in the midst of his single-handed success, to face the difficulties of a collegiate charge. To have another man, who may be the very opposite in temper, training, and tastes, put beside you, in one of confessedly the most delicate of earthly relations; to share with another the same people's affections which aforetime were all your own, or, if he does not share them, to feel it is certainly a misfortune, and almost a sin, that they are still all your own; to have no choice of the other, who is so to affect your whole position outwardly and inwardly, is a venture that needs courage to face, and grace, as well as a kind providence, to make good. Of course, this too, like everything, has the other side: of the young man, full of inexperience, and buoyant with crude hopes, being put, though with more of his own acceptance, in the same relationship to his colleague and the congregation, and especially when the colleague has long and most deservedly secured their affection. It is a happy thing that I can thus speak at this hour, which sees this long relationship brought to a close; since, had it been otherwise than as cordial, honest, and helpful as I can ever conceive such a relationship ever to be, I should gladly have passed by the theme. But, as I can testify, and you all know, it was a connection that passed through its various changes, from a more to a less strict collegiate, but in none of them passed into any change of upright dealing and affectionate regard. Much of this was owing to the all but unbroken wisdom of the congregation, which felt more and more that the working out of the matter was best left in the hands to which it properly belonged; but very much, certainly, came from one who was too sagacious not to know

when undue interference was not needed, or would not be relished; too wise to expect any other man worthy of being his colleague to be a copy of himself; and too kind and pure-minded to do anything but what was considerate and winning, or anything that savoured of jealousy and suspicion. I have known many men that I admire and love, but I can honestly say, after long trial, that a man that I would rather choose to be my colleague than Dr. Crichton I do not know to be living at this hour. Now that he is gone, he has left me to remember, and more and more desire to resemble, a character of singular attractiveness, and a kindness that grew richer every year to the end. Well may I look up and cry, "My father, my father! the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!" May the Lord God of the ascended Prophet, the great Head of the Church, guard me now that I feel, by his absence, strangely unprotected, and be with me, now he is away, even to the end.

I shall not enter minutely into details, most important in their relationship to spiritual results, but uninteresting, and all the better for being so, from their monotony of work and usefulness. I hasten over the stages of widowed life and weakened strength, and mark only the last shattered years. All these are so fresh in your hearts, that I could only diminish their interest by dwelling on them. Month by month the good man grew feebler, losing memory, speech, sometimes thought, but never losing his godliness and his gentleness. These grew sweeter under the shadows of trial and the approach of his departure. At last he walked very falteringly, and none eyed him but with a look of love; and the proud recollection of

brighter days was exchanged only for deeper respect and reverence. He came to his old seat in the church, and to the communion circle, surrounded by his noble elders, who held up his hands and cheered his heart, and by the beloved congregation that loved to see the beautiful and hoary head and the thin, meek, suffering face. He seemed to me, in these seasons, to resemble the apostle John, who, when old and infirm, was carried into the midst of his disciples, and all he could say at last was, "Little children, love one another," and when asked why he said nothing else, answered, "If that be done, it is enough."

But now the time came when Israel must die, and it was told us that he was about to be gathered to his fathers. As he drew near to the river, and touched its cold waters, he felt for a little his heart fail; but brief and well-known promises of God, spoken by loving lips, fell upon his ear, and dropped with comfort into his spirit; and prayers, short, but most earnest, went up to God, who heard and sent help to His servant in his last need. In that home where his failing years were spent, and now in these last hours, he was ministered unto with a thoughtfulness that grew with his growing infirmities, and knew nothing but to watch and anticipate his every wish. I am sure it is only expressing your truest and tenderest feelings to that daughter, and to her husband, who gave the heart and the care of a son to him, to say, "The Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead." At last he touched the bottom of the waters, and doubtless it was good. So, on the 14th of January 1871, and in its seventy-fourth year, passed away a life of rare charm and rich influence.

There was no need that he should leave us any words of his trust in Jesus, or of his love to us and to all. We know whom he believed ; and a blameless, humble, devoted life speaks more truly than all, even the most sacred words on a deathbed. We know how he loved the flock over whom the Master had set him, and his many friends,—and I know no man who had more,—and words could not add to such a life of love. We buried him in calm sorrow, because of our loss ; in high gratitude to God, for his unspotted career, his rare endowments by nature and grace, his rich harvest of fruit ; in sweet gratitude to him who was gone, for all his words, and deeds, and prayers, so healing and helpful ; and with one sentiment in all hearts, “ O man, greatly beloved.” May we see him again, that his heart and ours may rejoice. And now, could he speak from yonder heaven, he would say, to those who have chosen his Saviour and Master as theirs, “ Be thou faithful unto death, and thou shalt have a crown of life ;” and to those who have not, or are turning aside, “ Work the work of Him who hath sent you into the world : the night cometh when no man can work.” “ Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.” “ Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts : and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him ; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.”

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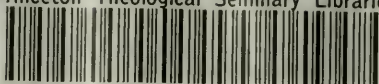
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